

**ACADEMIC STAFF PERCEPTION OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: A CASE  
STUDY OF AN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING INSTITUTION**

**by**

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## DECLARATION OF OWN WORK

I, Esther Matsetselane Maimela, hereby declare that “Academic staff perception of performance management: A case study of an open distance learning institution” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. This dissertation is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Commerce in Business Management.

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Signature

Date

(EM Maimela)

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## ABSTRACT

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are now adopting the management styles that are being practised in profit-making organisations in the private sector. The top management in HEIs embark on monitoring performance of all categories of their employees, including academic staff. This has become necessary in order to encourage and enhance quality in teaching and also to achieve increased research productivity. This means that the same principles involved in managing the private sector, such as introducing performance management systems, are now applied in the public sector. Empirical evidence from previous studies suggests that the introduction and implementation of performance management systems in academic institutions often result in tension between academic employees and management, thereby heightening the age-long debate on the necessity for academic freedom in institutions of higher learning globally.

The present study evaluated the perception of academic staff members regarding the implementation of a performance management system in an open distance learning institution in South Africa. The study adopted a survey research design, using a quantitative research approach. The total sample of the study comprised of 492 academic staff members of the institution. A structured self-administered web-based questionnaire that was tested for high reliability and validity content was used to collect primary data from the respondents. The data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential (one-way sample t-test) statistics. The research findings indicate that academic staff members at the institution are satisfied with the performance management system implemented by management. The study further found that academics do not consider the resultant performance bonus from the implementation of the performance management system sufficiently motivating and that it should therefore be reviewed by management. Overall, the outcome of the present study was to a large extent inconsistent with the empirical evidence presented by previous studies.

**Key terms:** performance management process; performance management system; higher education institutions; open distance learning institution; residential/contact universities; managerialism, motivation; strategic management; balanced scorecard;

organisational commitment; organisational culture; distributive justice; procedural justice; interactional justice; critical success factors; key performance indicators

## GLOSSARY

BSC	balanced scorecard
CHE	council of higher education
CIPD	chartered institute for personnel and development
CoDs	chair of department
CSFs	critical success factors
HEI	higher education institutions
HESA	higher education South Africa
HR	human resource
KPAs	key performance areas
KPIs	key performance indicators
MBO	management by objectives
NPM	new public management
ODL	open distance learning
UNESCO	united nations scientific and cultural organisations
UNISA	University of South Africa
SAIDE	South African institute for distance education

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the context, aims, objectives and significance of the study are set out. The chapter also defines key concepts and operational terms within the context of this study. A structural outline of the study is provided at the end of the chapter.

#### **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

One of the major challenges that have been placed on managers by the advent of globalisation is the need for them to develop sustainable human resource (HR) strategies that are capable of optimising business performance (Imran, Arif, Cheema & Azeem, 2014). One of such HR strategies is the development of a performance management system. According to Stanton and Nankervis (2011), the management of individual employee performance and their combined contributions to overall business effectiveness has become a crucial consideration for managers. However, Saeed and Shahbaz (2011) observe that designing and implementing an effective performance management system has always been a serious issue for consideration among HR managers. In their own contribution, Islam and Rasad (2006) view the performance management system as an inseparable part of organisational life. This compelling necessity for businesses to effectively optimise performance has resulted in the introduction of mechanisms that enable management to monitor the achievement of organisational goals on the one hand, and the level of contribution by employees to the achievement of these goals on the other hand.

The principles and practices of what later became known as performance management date back to the work of Frederick Taylor and Henry Ford, with further practices that extend further back into history (Waal, 2002). The principles of performance management cut across different management disciplines and include a variety of activities such as the planning and execution of actions that are required to ensure that employees' performance translate into the achievement of

organisational objectives (Center for Business Performance, 2009). Performance management processes have come to the fore in recent years as a means of providing a more integrated and continuous approach to the management of employee performance than was provided by previous, often inadequate merit rating or performance-appraisal schemes (Armstrong, 2009). On the other hand, Willaert and Willems (2006) states that interest in the performance management field was triggered by the fact that businesses are becoming complex, and as a result, they need to be managed and measured and have their processes and systems monitored accurately. The integrated approach of the performance management process ensures that it incorporates other HR systems/functions such as the provision of staff, performance evaluation, training and development and remuneration (Pieters, 2009). This will ensure that the performance management system is well aligned with the overall organisational goals.

According to Kandula (2006), the performance management system should always be designed to be organisational-specific and tailor-made to fit the requirements of each organisation, as the internal environment, business strategy, strengths and weaknesses, vision and mission of organisations are unique and exclusive. This implies that although there are many similarities in the aims and roles of performance management across organisations, the nature of the organisation dictates the type of performance management system to be adopted and implemented. This means that a performance management system in the educational sector, for instance, is expected to differ from the one in, for example, the retail or manufacturing industry.

According to Aguinis (2013), not all forms of performance management labelled as such by organisations are true forms of performance management. Sometimes, organisations confuse performance appraisal with the performance management process. These are two different concepts. Performance appraisal is one of the stages in the performance management process (Aguinis, 2013). The author describes performance appraisal as a system that involves employee evaluation once a year without any effort to provide feedback and coaching so that performance can be improved. Aguinis (2013) emphasises that performance appraisal is a mere systematic description of an employee's strengths and weaknesses – while on the

other hand, performance management does more than merely evaluate employees' performance. According to Aguinis (2013), the performance management process is a never-ending process of setting goals and objectives, observing performance, and receiving ongoing coaching and feedback in pursuit of organisational goal achievement. From this definition it becomes apparent that the performance management process is an ongoing activity, rather than a once-off activity.

A university is not a profit-seeking institution and its goal is not profit maximisation. Basically, the business of universities is ideas: the creation of ideas through research and the dissemination of ideas through education and application (Hudzik, 2011). However, in modern times, the subsidies universities receive from government push academic staff to consider their institution as a business aiming at maximising its profit (Hill, 2010). The pressure is sometimes applied on universities to become more 'business-like' in the way of doing things (Barry, Chandler & Clark, 2001; Carl & Kapp, 2004; Hill, 2010). According to Flaniken (2009) and Bogt and Scapens (2011), new public management is driving universities to increasingly measure their research and teaching performance. Academic staff are therefore rated according to whether they meet their expected teaching and research outputs.

Other aspects of changes in academic work as a result of external factors include, among other things, the following:

- Increasing pressure on time, workload and morale
- Emphasis on performance, professional standards and external accountability
- The shift from local control and individual autonomy (globalisation influences and guides how individuals should perform in organisations)
- The level of specialisation and complexity of university work
- The diffusion and blurring of roles (Coaldrake & Steadman, 1999; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Molefe, 2012; Oshagbemi, 1999; Tam, 2008; Ylijoki, 2005)

Among the external factors mentioned above, some manifest more in open distance learning (ODL) institutions than in residential/contact universities, for example the increasing pressure on time and workload due to a large number of modules and students, the shift from local control and individual autonomy as well as the diffusion and blurring of roles. These pressures could be perceived as unfair by academics in

ODL institutions, especially if their performance is assessed in the same way as that of their peers in residential/contact institutions.

Past approaches to performance management in higher education in South Africa were given limited emphasis by government, and its contribution to enhance institutional performance and quality has been neglected (Simmons, 2002). As a result, universities adopted a laissez-fair approach to performance management and therefore operated on a high 'trust' basis within an ethos that emphasised independence of thought and scholarship, academic freedom and collegiality (Molefe, 2010). However, it seems that this is something of the past. Due to pressure to increase productivity (measured through student pass rates and research outputs), responsibility and accountability, this approach resulted in higher education institutions (HEIs) developing and introducing performance management systems, such as the integrated performance management system and the 360-degree performance management system. This was done despite considerable literature on the ineffectiveness of performance management systems in other sectors as well as the widespread dissatisfaction of employees with actual performance management systems (Hainess & St-Onge, 2011; Karuhanga, 2010; Moullakis, 2005).

The perceptions of employees of the performance management system are important for the system to be effective. A survey conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) (2009) examining the views of employees from both profit-seeking and non-profit organisations as well as governmental institutions on performance management systems revealed that only 20% of the respondents believed that performance management systems have a positive impact on individual performance. A further 59% remained neutral, while 21% disagreed that it had a positive impact. Similarly, only 8% of the respondents said that the performance management systems contribute significantly to their performance or that of their organisations. This means that only a small group of employees can see the benefits of a performance management system. This observation supports the view of Moulakis (2005), Gruman and Saks (2011), Haines and St-Onge (2011) and Aguinis, Joo and Gottfredson (2011) that performance management is not effective. Therefore, as the system is perceived to be ineffective, this could lead to employees feeling that performance management systems are introduced merely to put pressure on them to perform at specific levels, which is



equivalent to taking away their autonomy. The study of Nani, Dixon and Vollman (1990) revealed that employees find the main purpose of a performance management system to be merely ensuring that organisations pursue strategies that lead to the achievement of overall goals and objectives. According to Roberts, McNulty and Stiles (2005), if a performance management system is perceived by employees as placing too much emphasis on pressurising employees to achieve organisational goals, the system can be counter-productive. For instance, the study of Munene, Schwartz and Kibanja (2005) revealed that in an extreme counter-productive climate, employees develop coping strategies by doing what is minimal or default whenever they have an opportunity, while others quit their job, or stay, but sacrifice quality for quantity. Aguinis (2013) and Saeed and Shahbaz (2011) further revealed that if a performance management system is not effectively implemented, particularly the performance-appraisal (evaluation/review) stage, or if employees are not fully engaged in this process (employees becoming involved during the setting of their goals and standards), employees can embark on unhealthy competition to the detriment of organisational goal achievement instead of working as a team.

Research has shown that HEIs are facing major challenges regarding the management of the performance of academics both nationally and internationally (Carl & Kapp, 2004; Mapesela & Strydom, 2004; Tam, 2008). This is viewed as problematic and challenging, particularly if applied to academic staff, as it leads to reduced productivity and creates morale problems. According Mapesela and Strydom (2004), academics view performance management systems as failing to take account of the very nature of the educational process. On the other hand, Parsons and Slabbert (2001) hold that one main challenge is that the nature of academic work is not simply lecturing undergraduate students or being involved in research activities; it is rather a multifaceted and complex activity with a surprisingly large number of interdependent variables that affect both the quality and the quantity of the output the academic staff produce. The authors also find the performance management system to be relatively new to education, having its origins from industry and the commercial environment, and it is therefore generally viewed with a high degree of suspicion by academics particularly.

It is worth mentioning, however, that there is, at the very least, a mixed assessment of the effects of university performance management systems on academics (Tam,

2008). For example, Taylor (2001) and Flaniken (2009) emphasise that the introduction of performance indicators in an academic institution can motivate its members to work better and harder, that is, to teach better and increase research outputs. This is due to their desire for external rewards, cash and promotions, rather than intrinsic factors such as recognition and enriched job content. However, this can only be possible if performance management is perceived by employees as fair. This study therefore aimed to explore the perceptions and experiences of academic staff regarding the implementation of a performance management system at their institution.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In today's competitive business world, it is understood that organisations can only gain competitive advantage through innovation, and organisations can be innovative through effective management of their HR (Boachie-Mensah, 2012). This compelling necessity therefore calls for the introduction of performance management systems in organisations in order to effectively monitor employee performance. However, studies by Parsons and Slabbert (2001) and Tam (2008) revealed that the move towards the introduction of performance management into the domain of academia appears to be problematic, challenging and frustrating. The authors contend that performance management has been perceived by academics as a management tool imported from the private sector and other parts of the public sector, seeking to introduce command and control over work behaviours in order to achieve institutional objectives. The authors further argue that because performance management systems have their origin in industry and the commercial environment, it is generally viewed with a high degree of suspicion in the higher education sector, particularly by academic staff. Tam (2008) also finds the managerial principle in performance management systems to be in conflict with university traditions of 'collegiality' and 'academic freedom'. Therefore, the introduction of such a system to academic staff may be seen as challenging the traditional ways of how academics self-manage their work and their long-established professional identities.

This study was further informed by the fact that while there have been increasing trends to study the impact of performance management on the overall performance of the organisation, much of this research has been conducted in the private sector.

Further, existing literature reveal that the majority of studies on the impact of a performance management system in higher education were conducted at residential/contact HEIs, where the working conditions of academic staff differ from those of the ODL higher education universities. The major difference is that academics at ODL universities are office-bound for longer hours to ensure their availability to students, while the academics at residential/contact universities have flexible working hours. Therefore, there is a need to determine how academic staff at ODL institutions perceive performance management systems at their institutions. This study focused on the University of South Africa (Unisa) as the only ODL university in South Africa.

The study aimed to address the following research questions:

***Primary research question:***

What are the experiences and perceptions of academic staff at the ODL university regarding the implementation of a performance management system?

***Secondary research questions:***

1. Are academics aware of the performance management system in their institution?
2. How do academics perceive the value and purpose of the performance management system?
3. Are academics involved in the setting of their performance goals and standards?
4. How do academics view the effectiveness of their chair of departments in managing their performance?
5. What challenges and benefits do academics perceive in their performance management system?
6. How does the current performance management system influence the academics' work and the achievement of institutional goals?

## **1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

### **1.4.1 Aim**

The overall aim of this study was to explore and describe the experiences and perceptions of academic staff at the ODL university regarding the implementation of a performance management system.

### **1.4.2 Objectives**

The following objectives were formulated to address the research questions:

1. To establish whether academic staff members are aware of the performance-management system
2. To determine whether academic staff members find any value and purpose in the performance management system
3. To determine whether academic staff members are involved in the setting of their goals and standards
4. To examine the view of academic staff members of the effectiveness of their chair of departments in managing their performance
5. To identify the challenges and benefits perceived by academic staff in the performance management system
6. To determine how the performance management system influences academic s' work and achievement of institutional goals.

## **1.5 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

Research (in the social sciences) aims to expand the boundaries of existing scientific knowledge (epistemology) (Myers, 2009; Saunders, Thornhill & Lewis, 2012) by studying a (social) reality (ontology) such as a phenomenon, event or behaviour in a systematic (objective and methodical) and rigorous manner (methodology). The existing body of knowledge gave rise to the problem investigated, while the purpose of the inquiry stemmed from the problem. In this instance, the researcher observed that performance management in academic institutions, especially in ODL environments, is a neglected area. Consequently, the researcher set out to evaluate

the experiences and perceptions of academic staff at an ODL institution in order to understand their views of performance management in their institution.

Research is a systematic process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information (data) in order to increase our understanding of a phenomenon in which we are interested or about which we are concerned (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:2). In contrast, methodology describes how something will be done. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), the research methodology is the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project; to some extent, this approach dictates the particular tools the researcher selects.

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design is the overall plan for relating the conceptual research problem to relevant and practicable empirical research (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010). In other words, the research design provides a plan or a framework for data collection and analysis. This study employed a census survey research design using a quantitative research technique. Floyed and Fowler (2013) defines a census survey as a means of collecting information about every individual in a population. This approach was deemed more appropriate for this study due to its case study nature in order to enable all academic staff in the institution to participate. Survey research design generally involves the collection of quantitative or quantifiable data, predominantly using a questionnaire or structured interviews at a single point in time (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

## **1.7 POPULATION**

A population is a full set of cases from which a sample can be taken (Welman, Kruger & Mitchel, 2005). The population of this study comprised of 1 775 academic staff members of the ODL institution that was surveyed.

## **1.8 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Ghauri and Gronhaug (2010:171) define data analysis as the process of systematically applying statistical and logical techniques to describe, summarise and compare data. This gives meaning to the raw data and also allows for easy interpretation. Using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), descriptive

statistics were employed to process and analyse biographic information, while inferential statistics were employed using the one-way t-test to test for the means and significant level of the respondents' answers to the questionnaire items. Descriptive statistics describe the general characteristics of a set or distribution scores to allow the researcher (or the reader of the research report) to get an accurate first impression of "what the data look like" (Salkind, 2012:162). Descriptive analyses (frequency tables, histograms and pie charts) were used to present the data.

## **1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE**

The outcome of this study provided some important insights that could provide the managers of the university under study, and indeed the management of other ODL institutions, with a better understanding of the perceptions of academics regarding the introduction and implementation of performance management systems. The findings of this study may also assist managers in the effective management of barriers and challenges that are currently being experienced in the implementation of the performance management system at the case university. The outcome of this study also provides a significant addition to the body of existing literature in the general field of HR management, and further advances the frontier of knowledge particularly on the subject of performance management systems, both locally and internationally.

## **1.10 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS USED IN THIS STUDY**

### **1.10.1 Performance management process**

This refers to a continuous process of identifying, measuring and developing the performance of individuals and teams and aligning it with the strategic goals of the organisation (Aguinis, 2013:2).

### **1.10.2 Performance management system**

This refers to an authoritative framework for managing employee performance, which includes the policy framework as well as the framework relating to all elements in the performance cycle, including performance planning and agreement; performance monitoring, review and control; performance appraisals and moderating; and managing the outcomes of appraisal (Bacal, 1999:3).

### **1.10.3 Open distance learning institution**

This refers to the academic institution that provides flexible educational opportunities in terms of access and multiple modes of knowledge acquisition (Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2011).

### **1.10.4 Residential/contact universities**

These are HEIs offering face-to-face lectures which students attend on campus on a daily basis with lectures at specific times and days (SACOB, 2014).

### **1.10.5 Managerialism**

This refers to the ideology that purports to explain new discourses of management derived from the profit sector, whose introduction into publicly funded institutions has been encouraged by governments seeking to reduce public spending costs (Deem, 2004).

### **1.10.6 Motivation**

The concept of motivation is described as internal factors that impel action and external factors that can act as inducements to action (Locke & Latham, 2006).

### **1.10.7 Organisational commitment**

Organizational commitment may be defined as relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a specific organisation (Suma & Lesha, 2013:44).

### **1.10.8 Organisational culture**

Organisational culture refers to a system of a shared meaning held by members, distinguishing the organisation from others (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal & Roodt, 2009:99).

### **1.10.9 Balanced scorecard**

The balanced scorecard (BSC) supplements traditional financial measures with criteria that measure performance from three additional perspectives – those of innovation, or product/services/people (including the learning and development of people), effectiveness of internal processes, and experiences of customers (Kaplan & Norton, 1996b:2).

### **1.10.10 Critical success factors**

Critical success factors (CSFs) refer to a qualitative description of an element of the organisational strategy in which the organisation has to excel in order to be successful (Rockart, 1979:85).

### **1.10.11 Key performance indicator**

The key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to quantify/measure the CSFs; that is, they measure whether the organisation successfully achieves its CSFs (De Waal, 2007:30).

## **1.11 SUMMARY AND OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

Chapter 1 provided an orientation and the context in which the study was conducted. The chapter explained the rationale for the research, the research problem and questions, and the aim and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2 contains the literature analysis, which was aimed at guiding the study on performance management systems in ODL institutions. The chapter provides a background of the performance management system, its origin, purpose and challenges and the theoretical framework of this study. The relationship between performance management and the concepts of strategic management, organisational culture and commitment is also discussed. The different frameworks of performance management systems are also discussed in this chapter.



Chapter 3 provides a contextual background and application of performance management systems, particularly in the higher education sector. The chapter further discusses the reasons for and challenges of the introduction of performance management systems in the higher education sector, with particular reference to ODL institutions.

In Chapter 4 the research design and methodology used in conducting the study are explained. The measuring instrument employed in collecting the primary data as well as the data-collection methods is discussed in detail in this chapter.

Chapter 5 presents and interprets the findings of this study.

In Chapter 6 the summary of the research results are provided. The chapter also provides the conclusions and limitations of the study. The chapter concludes by making suggestions for future research directions and recommendations to appropriate authorities.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter one provided a background to the study as well as an overview of the rationale behind the growth of performance management in organisations across industries. It also highlighted the divergent views of performance management pertaining to academics, taking into consideration the nature of their work.

This chapter contains the literature analysis, which was aimed at guiding the study on performance management in an ODL institution (Unisa). The chapter starts with brief definitions and an overview of performance management, its origins and evolution, its purpose in the organisation, its challenges in terms of design and implementation, its relationship with organisational commitment and culture, an analysis of theories underlying performance management, namely the expectancy and goal-setting theories, as well as a presentation of several performance management models found in the literature.

#### **2.2 DEFINING AND CONTEXTUALISING THE CONCEPT OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Different definitions of performance management can be found in the literature, as pointed out in Chapter one. Some of these definitions are more inclusive than others, embracing the performance of both the individual and the organisation. According to Sousa, de Nijs and Hendriks (2010:5), what defines performance management is that it links the work behaviour of individuals and groups to organisational effectiveness identified by the strategic goals set by the organisation. Armstrong (2009:618) defines the concept of performance management as “a systematic process for improving organisational performance by developing the performance of individuals and teams”. From this definition it becomes clear that organisational performance depends on the performance of individuals and teams in the

organisation. Another definition is that provided by Hawke (2012:310), who views the performance management concept as “the interrelated strategies and activities to improve the performance of individuals, teams and organisations’ methodologies, processes, metrics and systems that help an organisation to manage business performance”. Aguinis (2013:2) further defines the concept as “a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and aligning performance with the strategic goals of the organisation”. Similarly, the United States Office of Personnel Management (2011:4) defines performance management as a systematic process of planning work and setting expectations, continually monitoring performance, developing capacity to perform, periodically rating performance in summary fashion and rewarding good performance. Based on the definitions above, the concept of performance management can be viewed as a mechanism of managing employee performance with an endeavour to achieve the goals of the organisation as a whole.

Although there is no single universally accepted definition in the literature, the definitions provided earlier share common characteristics of performance management. However, Kandula (2006) argues that some of the characteristics in these definitions are not practically applied in some organisations’ performance management systems, which leads to negative perceptions about the systems by their recipients.

Despite many definitions of performance management in the literature, there is confusion about what it exactly stands for, as is the case with many widespread management concepts (Verweire & Van den Berghe, 2003). It should be noted that performance management is not performance appraisal/evaluation/measurement (Aguinis & Pierce, 2007:140; Armstrong, 2009:618; Educos, 2012; Potgieter, 2005). Performance appraisal forms only one small element in a chain of events that constitute the performance management process (Educos, 2012; United States Office of Personnel Management, 2011). However, that ‘one small’ element is viewed as a cornerstone of the whole process of performance management (Gruman & Saks, 2011). This is because performance appraisal is always (and will always be) seen as a subjective activity; and if not handled well, it can result in the whole performance management process not achieving its intended goals. Kandula

(2006:5) defines performance appraisal as “a singular activity that is employed to assess performance of employees for a predetermined duration on a set of parameters”. On the other hand, Nayab (2011) describes performance appraisal as a limited and reactive function of evaluating past performance, undertaken once or twice a year. It can be noted from the performance appraisal definitions mentioned earlier that, in contrast to performance management, which aims at developing employees in order to improve their performance in the future, performance appraisal merely focuses on measuring employees’ past performance, either quarterly, biannually or annually, in relation to organisational goal achievement. However, This has been criticised in the literature. There is a strong emphasis in the literature that the concept of ‘performance appraisal’ should be abandoned and be replaced by ‘performance management’; the reason being that the former is too narrow (Amaratunga & Baldry, 2002; Nayab, 2011; Rao, 2008). According to Rao (2008), focusing on only appraising employee performance on the basis of numbers assigned by the appraiser without awareness of the context in which the ratings are assigned could inflict serious injustice to the performer. Therefore, when managing employee performance, organisations should focus on the bigger picture; that is, aiming at developing employees for them to be able to achieve organisational goals, rather than merely assigning ratings to employee performance.

## **2.3 EVOLUTION OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Despite the literature tracking the concept of performance management back to the history of managing organisational performance, as alluded to in Chapter one, Brudan (2010) shares a different opinion as performance management is viewed as a relatively young and emergent discipline. Brudan (2010) is further of the opinion that performance management evolved through three different levels, namely individual, operational and strategic levels. These three levels of the evolution of performance management are briefly discussed in the section below.

### **2.3.1 Individual performance management evolution**

Brudan (2010) contends that the individual level of performance management evolution can be seen as the traditional level at which performance management is used in organisations (i.e. performance appraisal). This is also perhaps the level with

the longest evolution in history, as it mirrors the level of organisational maturity. The precise origin of performance appraisal is not known, but the practice dates back to the third century when the emperors of the Wei Dynasty (221–265 AD) rated the performance of the official family members. In early times, organisations were loosely defined and their performance management focus was based on individuals performing tasks as part of a group. In time, more complex approaches emerged, mainly driven by military, public administration and industrial companies. They all needed a system of monitoring the performance of numerous individuals to ensure a streamlined progression in the organisational hierarchy.

### **2.3.2 Operational performance management evolution**

Performance management at the operational level is linked to the operational management of the organisation. It focuses on the achievement of department or group objectives. Although it is aligned with the corporate strategy, its focus is more functional. It would therefore differ across functional areas of the organisation, such as marketing, finance, accounting and HR management.

According to Brudan (2010), the evolution of operational performance management is linked to the evolution of accounting and management practices. This is due to the fact that operational performance is traditionally evaluated in terms of efficiency/productivity/low cost as well as effectiveness in goal achievement. The easiest way to do this is by using financial indicators, provided by the accounting function in organisations. Over time, as internal and external operating environments became more complex, organisations started to look at non-financial indicators of performance, as explained by Chow and Van der Stede (2006):

“With the advent of new competitive realities such as increased customisation, flexibility, and rapid response to customer expectations, as well as new manufacturing practices such as Just in Time and total quality management, many have argued that accounting-based performance measurement systems are no longer adequate”.

### **2.3.3 Strategic performance management evolution**

At the strategic level, performance management deals with the achievement of organisational objectives. Practitioners refer to it as corporate, business or enterprise

performance management; this being the highest and most complete level of usage of performance management principles in organisations. This is because it emphasises the holistic performance management system. Strategic performance management was born to differentiate between the individual and the organisational levels of performance management. The former refers to monitoring the performance of individuals and teams, while the latter refers to the management of the performance of the organisation as a whole.

## **2.4 THE PURPOSE OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE ORGANISATION**

Monitoring performance through financial measures brought serious dissatisfaction in organisations (Busi & Bitici, 2006). As a result, it became necessary to manage organisational performance in a holistic manner (Whittington-Jones, 2005). According to De Waal (2007) and Folan and Browne (2005), the proper way of monitoring performance is to combine non-financial leading indicators with financial lagging indicators in one system. Some of the approaches followed to address the balance between financial and non-financial measures are the BSC model by Kaplan and Norton (1996a:21) and Rockart's (1979) concepts of CSFs, also known as key performance areas (KPA), which can be measured with KPIs. The BSC model incorporates other measures such as customers, organisational capabilities as well as core competencies when monitoring and managing performance, rather than focusing on financial measures only (Kaplan & Norton, 1996a).

The performance management process is built on the assumption that defining measurable and rewardable work agenda contributes to organisational success (Aguinis *et al.*, 2011). According to Qureshi, Shahjehan, Rehman and Afsar (2010), many organisations generally implement performance management formally and informally in their organisations with the motivation to achieve better organisational performance. Kim (2011:2) summarised different reasons for introducing performance management as to (1) provide information on organisational and/or employees' effectiveness; (2) improve organisational and/or employees' effectiveness; (3) provide information on organisational and/or employees' efficiency; (4) improve organisational and/or employees' efficiency; (5) improve employees'

levels of motivation; (6) link employees' pay with perceptions of their performance; (7) raise levels of employee accountability; and (8) align employees' objectives with those of the organisation as a whole.

On the other hand, Aguinis (2013) asserts that performance management systems serve strategic, administrative, informational, developmental, organisational maintenance and documentational purposes, which are discussed below.

#### **2.4.1 Strategic purpose**

The first purpose of a performance management system is to help top management achieve strategic business objectives. The Edinburgh Business School (2008), Verweire and Van den Berghe (2003), and Aguinis *et al.* (2011) share the same view, as they state that good performance management systems help employees to communicate organisational goals more clearly and link them to individual goals. This purpose corresponds with point one of Kim's purposes of performance management listed earlier.

#### **2.4.2 Administrative purpose**

A second purpose of a performance management system is to furnish valid and useful information for making administrative decisions about employees. Such administrative decisions include decisions relating to salary adjustments, promotions, employee retention or termination, recognition of superior individual performance, identification of poor performers, lay-offs and merit increases. This is done during the performance-review/appraisal stage, where employees' performance is evaluated in terms of being in line with organisational goals.

#### **2.4.3 Informational purpose**

The performance management system serves as an important two-way communication device. It clarifies the types of behaviours and results that are valued and rewarded by the organisation (Aguinis *et al.*, 2011). It includes ongoing communication and negotiations regarding the establishment of performance standards, the yardsticks to be used to assess success, and the distribution of tangible and intangible rewards (Aguinis & Pierce, 2007). First, performance

management systems inform employees on how they are doing and provide them with information on specific areas in which they may need improvement. Second, they provide information regarding the organisation's and supervisor's expectations and what aspects of work the supervisor believes are most important. As a result, both managers and employees will know whether or not employees are on the right track in working towards the achievement of organisational goals.

#### **2.4.4 Developmental purpose**

Managers can use information gathered through the performance management system, feedback specifically, to coach employees and improve performance on an ongoing basis. This feedback allows for the identification of strengths and weaknesses as well as the causes for performance deficiencies (which could be due to individual, group or contextual factors).

#### **2.4.5 Organisational maintenance purpose**

The performance management system also provides information to be used in workforce planning. Workforce planning comprises a set of systems that allows organisations to anticipate and respond to the needs emerging within and outside the organisation, to determine priorities, and to allocate HR where they can do the most good.

#### **2.4.6 Documentational purpose**

The performance management system allows for the documentation of important administrative decisions. This information can be important especially in cases of litigation, for example if an employee is not satisfied with the decision taken against him/her based on the performance management system. The organisation will be on the safe side if it documented all performance information.

Looking at the above purposes of performance management by Kim (2011) and Aguinis (2013), it becomes clear that both authors view performance management as a tool to ensure that employees contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation. They both view performance management as a tool to clarify and align individual goals with those of the organisation, and to ensure that employees are rewarded for their contributions.



Interestingly, despite an abundance of literature expounding the importance of performance management and the likely benefits, this material has not been coupled with a widespread adoption of effective performance management systems (Compton, 2005). Despite many benefits of performance management mentioned earlier, Coleman (2009) argues that it is unrealistic to expect that when a performance management system is implemented, employees will immediately be motivated to perform better. Coleman (2009) further stresses that to realise the full potential benefits of the performance management system, the organisation must be prepared to invest resources to ensure that the employees and managers 'own' the system; otherwise it will be treated as a compliance activity and neither the employees nor the organisation will benefit from the system. Decramer, Christiaens and Vanderstraeten (2007) emphasise that when managing the performance of teams and individuals in organisations, both inputs (behaviour) and outputs (results) need to be considered and managed. According to these authors, many performance management systems focus more on reliance on numbers and quantitative presentation of accomplishments (only outputs and outcomes). Therefore, during the design of performance management systems the organisation should consider adding an element of inputs (such as behaviour) applied to get the outcomes and achievements rated.

## **2.5 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**

There is a very important relationship between strategic planning, which is one component in the process of strategic management, and performance management (Pirtea, Nicolescu & Botoc, 2009). According to Pirtea *et al.* (2009), performance management is about setting and achieving goals that were set during strategic planning sessions. Strategic management is all about the identification and description of the strategies that managers can carry out so as to achieve better performance towards the achievement of organisational goals as well as the competitive advantage for their organisation (Management Study Guide, 2008). Robbins and Coulter (2012:198), on the other hand, define strategic management as

a set of managerial decisions and actions that determines the long-run performance of an organisation. According to Lynch (2012:5), the field of strategic management deals with the major intended and emergent initiatives taken by general managers on behalf of owners, involving the utilisation of resources, to enhance the performance of firms in their external environment. Therefore, because the external environment is dynamic, organisational business unit as well as individual and team goals should be flexible to adapt to the external environment. The management of individual employees and teams as one of the organisational resources is therefore part of strategic management.

Strategic management encompasses interrelated processes of strategic planning (formulation), implementation (execution) and evaluation (control) (David, 2012; Pollard & Hotho, 2006; Robbins & Coulter, 2012). Tapinos, Dyson and Meadows (2005) as well as Soriano, Torres and Chalmeta-Rosalen (2010) emphasise that at the strategic planning phase a range of strategies to be followed in an attempt to achieve the organisational direction is developed. However, Gates (2010) warns that although the purpose of strategic planning is straightforward, namely to outline where an organisation wants to go and how it is going to get there, its nature is complex and dynamic.

At the strategic implementation (execution) phase, strategies formulated in the strategic planning phase are implemented. According to Robbins and Coulter (2002), no matter how effectively an organisation has planned its strategies, it cannot succeed if the strategies are not implemented properly. People in the organisations are the sole implementers of organisational strategies; however, many organisations fail at this stage (Kaplan & Norton, 2005; Mankins & Steel, 2005). According to these authors, in order to succeed, organisations should view the implementation and strategic planning phases as inextricably linked. Finally, the strategic evaluation (control) phase involves a review to determine whether the chosen objectives are being achieved. In general, this phase focuses on three questions, namely (1) Is the strategy implemented as planned? (2) Is the strategy achieving the intended results? and (3) What adjustments, if any, are necessary? (Robbins & Coulter, 2002; Saad, 2001).

All three components of strategic management discussed earlier are embraced in performance management. For example, many performance management models emphasise the setting of goals (strategic formulation), executing the task towards the achievement of the set goals (strategic implementation) and finally, the review evaluation/appraisal of performance (strategic evaluation/control). However, a point worth mentioning is that all the phases in the performance management process should be in line with the strategic goals of the organisation as a whole. This is referred to as strategic performance management (London & Mone, 2009). According to these authors, strategic performance management programmes facilitate setting goals in relation to larger objectives, measuring results and seeking improvement. Therefore, employee performance should always be managed in a way that contributes to the achievement of the goals of the organisation as a whole.

## **2.6 INDIVIDUAL VERSUS ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: IS THERE ANY NEED TO SYNCHRONISE?**

Performance management focuses on achieving organisational goals. According to Macky and Johnson (2000), the emphasis of performance management is on continuously improving organisational performance, and this is achieved through individual employee performance. This view is further shared by Stanton and Nankervis (2011), who also stress that the management of individual employee performance and their combined contributions to overall effectiveness has become crucial. Siemens CEO Heinrich von Piere, as quoted in Bisoux (2004:19), shares the same view: "Whether a company measures in hundreds of thousands, its success relies solely on individual performance. Accordingly, failing to demand each individual's best will inevitably lead to the worst".

Oliver (2008) further warns that in order for organisations to be successful with their aims and objectives, they need the total buy-in of individual employees into their performance plans. As such, the performance management system becomes a primary tool for managing the business if it is significant in shaping individual behaviour and ensuring these are directed towards achieving the strategic aims of the organisation (CIPD, 2009). According to Aguinis (2013), once the goals for the

entire organisation have been established, similar goals cascade downwards, with departments setting objectives to support the organisation's overall mission and objectives. Aguinis (2013) further emphasises that there are two important prerequisites before a performance management system is implemented, namely knowledge of the organisation's mission and strategic goals, and knowledge of the job in question. The cascading continues downward until each team and the individual employees have a set of goals compatible with those of the organisation. In such a case, the performance management system may be seen as a vehicle for aligning individual employee performance with organisational strategy. This linkage of individual, section, division and overall outcomes of the organisation has been perceived as the key to effectiveness and global competitiveness for many years (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2009; Cascio & Boudreau, 2009; CIPD 2009; Fitz-Enz, 2009; London & Mone, 2009; Losey, Meisinger & Ulrich, 2006; Ulrich & Smallwood, 2005).

Individuals can know their job content better through the process of job analysis. Job analysis is the process of collecting, analysing and setting out information about the content of jobs in order to provide the basis for a job description and data for recruitment, training, job evaluation and performance management (Armstrong, 2009:444). It focuses on what job holders are expected to do in order to contribute to organisational goal achievement. Fox (2006) further emphasises that for performance management to be effective at the individual level, several variables need to be considered, namely motivation, ability, understanding, organisational support, feedback and validity, which make performance management complex. Therefore, because individual employees play a major role in the performance of an organisation as a whole, it is important for organisations not just to focus on overall organisational performance, but to manage the performance of individuals and teams as well.

## **2.7 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE**

Organisational culture refers to a system of a shared meaning held by members, distinguishing the organisation from others (Robbins *et al.*, 2009). According to Solomons (2006) and Robbins *et al.* (2009), the organisational culture affects the performance of the organisation. Solomons (2006) emphasises that for performance

management system to be effective, it is essential that the organisational attitude and culture be receptive to the possible changes that may be forthcoming with the introduction of performance management. In recent years, the efforts of many organisations in both the public and the private sectors have been directed towards creating a 'performance culture' (Mullich, 2008). Mullich (2008) further states that to develop a culture that embraces accountability, employees and the organisation as a whole must be able to see quantifiable progress toward specific goals. This can be achieved by setting goals that are achievable and measurable and that align well with the organisation's overall goals (Aguinis, 2013). In other words, employees should see how exactly how they contribute to their organisation's goals. On the other hand, Shields (2008) and Bitici, Mendibil, Nuturupati, Garengo and Turner (2004) are of the opinion that the introduction of a performance management system can help transform employee values, attitudes and behaviour so as to elicit higher levels of organisational performance membership behaviour and/organisational citizenship behaviour. This means that the introduction of performance management can result in a culture change of employees, and eventually a change of the culture of the organisation as a whole. Shields (2008) further affirms that to achieve the performance culture in the organisation, the performance management systems must be tied with rewards/incentives.

The employee relations climate also plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of performance management systems (Haines & St-Onge, 2011). According to these authors, a more positive employee relations climate is associated with performance management effectiveness, in other words, employees will buy into performance management systems if they have strong social relations with their management.

Kandula (2006) and Ogbonna (2007), on the other hand, warn that transforming organisational culture is not an easy task that can be done overnight. This is because, first, it involves a change in policies and procedures (Kandula, 2006); and second, no matter how managers try, they cannot change and manage the subconscious assumptions and values that guide people's behaviour (Ogbonna, 2007). In other words, mere physical change will not bring about the anticipated progress. It requires change in people, called transition, which means a shift in employee mindset from the way things are done at a specific point in time to a new

way of doing things. According to Robinson, Carrillo, Anumba and A-Ghassani (2005), organisational culture and people are key barriers to the implementation of the performance management system. However, people find change traumatic, and resistance from employees should be anticipated as a result (Robinson *et al.*, 2005).

## **2.8 THE INFLUENCE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ON ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT**

The central role HR management practices play in creating and maintaining commitment is critical (Kipkebut, 2010). Performance management is one of these HR practices. The relationship between job performance and organisation commitment has been empirically proved (Lok & Crawford, 2004; Brown, Hyatt & Benson, 2010; Khan, Ziauddin, Jam & Ramay, 2010; Kuvaas, 2011; Quisar, Rehman & Suffyan, 2012; Memari, Mahdieh & Marnani, 2013). According to Meyer and Allen (2004) and Celik (2008), commitment implies an intention to persist with a course of action. They further state that organisations often try to foster commitment in their employees to achieve stability and reduce costly turnover, as it is commonly believed that committed employees will work harder and be more likely to 'go the extra mile' to achieve organisational objectives. Gbadamosi and Al-Qahtany (2005) describe organisational commitment as some form of attachment and loyalty employees have towards their organisation. On the other hand, Suma and Lesha (2013:44) define organisational commitment as a relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a specific organisation.

Therefore, a committed employee is the one who stays with the organisation through thick and thin, attends work regularly, puts in full days (and maybe more), protects the company's assets and shares company goals (Krausert, 2009; Nehmeh, 2009). Such employees have the achievement of their organisation's goals at heart and are likely to display outstanding performance, and ultimately enhance the performance of the organisation as a whole (Celik, 2008).

Despite several studies finding a strong relationship between organisational commitment and employee performance, other studies found the opposite. For example, Steers (1977) as well as Guest, Michie, Conway and Sheehan (2003) found that commitment was generally unrelated to performance (weak relationship). According to Rashid, Sambasivan and Johari (2003), this could be due to many

factors. Rashid *et al.* (2003) investigated initiatives to reduce absenteeism. Their findings revealed that the samples (two organisations) in the study experienced difficulties in reducing turnover rate and absenteeism. The implication was that managers tend to retain more security-minded 'settlers' who are loyal, but not high performers.. These organisations also ended up being more stable and less productive with a less creative workforce. This is because managers in both organisations were more concerned with employee retention than high performance. In other words, in these organisations, employees are encouraged to be loyal and committed to their organisation, rather than display high performance. In another study conducted by Tolenetino (2012) among university administrative workers and academics, it was revealed that job performance is not influenced or affected by the organisational commitment of both groups. The implication of these findings is that committed employees are not always good performers. Therefore, organisations should set their goals straight, that is, whether they strive for organisational commitment or high organisational performance or both, and they should design and implement performance management accordingly.

## **2.9 THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION IN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

For employees to reciprocate the performance management performance management practices in their organisation, they should first perceive these practices as just and fair (Farndale, Van Ruiten, Kelliher & Hope-Hailey, 2011; Islam & Rasad, 2005; Kavanagh, Benson & Brown, 2007; Luthra & Jain, 2012). This means that if employees perceive the performance management performance management system as biased, unfair and lacking rigour, it is unlikely that they will accept the outcomes of the system. Therefore, in the organisation employees develop beliefs about what is a fair reward for their job contribution. This is what is referred to in the literature as 'organisational justice' (Baldwin, 2006; Greenberg, 1990). Justice or fairness refers to the idea that an action or decision is morally right, which may be defined according to ethics, religion, fairness, equity or law (Greenberg, 1990). The three most prevalent forms of organisational justice in the literature are distributive, procedural and interactional justice, which are discussed in the following sections.

### **2.9.1 Distributive justice**

This type of justice is built on the principles of Adams's (1963) equity theory. According to this theory, people compare their own perceived work outcomes (rewards) in relation to their own perceived work inputs (contributions) with the corresponding ratios of a co-worker (Adams, 1963). In other words, employees compare themselves with other employees to find out whether they are being treated fairly. According to Baxamusa (2012), when individuals think their inputs are rewarded according to their outputs and are equal to those of others around them, they are satisfied, but when they notice others are getting more recognition and rewards, in spite of doing the same amount of work, they become dissatisfied. Therefore, such an employee will be motivated to do something about it, that is, to seek justice (Adams, 1963).

According to Adams (1963), inputs are typically effort, loyalty, hard work, commitment, skill, ability, adaptability, flexibility, tolerance, determination, heart and soul, enthusiasm, trust in the boss and superiors, support of colleagues and subordinates and personal sacrifice. Employees will then compare these inputs with outputs. Outputs are typically all financial rewards, such as pay, salary, expenses, perks, benefits, pension arrangements, bonus and commission, plus intangibles, such as recognition, reputation, praise and thanks, interest, responsibility, stimulus, travel, training, development, and a sense of achievement and advancement, among other things. People respond differently if they feel their inputs are not being fairly rewarded. Some, when demotivated, may choose to reduce input/efforts and/or seek change. Others may choose to improve outputs by making claims or demands for more rewards or seeking an alternative job. Therefore, for performance management to be regarded as fair, ratings, judgements as well as rewards assigned during performance appraisal should be consistent across employees.

### **2.9.2 Procedural justice**

Outcomes or decisions (distributive justice) is not the only relevant issue to an individual – how one is treated is equally important (Coetzee, 2005). Procedural justice is concerned with fairness of procedures, that is, how a specific decision was



arrived at. This raises the question: “What do employees mean when they say the process is fair or unfair?” This question can be answered by providing six criteria of fair procedures: consistency, unbiasedness, suppression, accuracy, correctability and ethicality, identified by Leventhal (1980). Accordingly, the performance management process will be perceived as fair by employees if it is in line with all six criteria. Further, Coetzee (2005) argues that people consider procedures that allow them to express their opinions (voice) to be fair, as it allows them to participate in group processes as valuable group members. This is also supported by Gruman and Saks (2011), who point out that one important way to enhance the performance management process is to focus on fostering employee engagement as a driver of employee performance. Therefore, this calls for performance management in organisations to be more engaging and participatory for them to be viewed as fair by employees. This will make employees feel recognised by their organisation.

### **2.9.3 Interactional justice**

According to Perista and Quintal (2010), the concept of interactional fairness reflects the quality of interaction with the decision maker, that is, in terms of whether the decision maker acts with respect and dignity and provides appropriate and logical justification to the workers. This concept focuses on social interactions, that is, on the way in which the decision maker transmits and explains the results to the workers. Therefore, this type of justice calls for performance management systems in organisations to provide feedback.

## **2.10 MOTIVATION THEORIES AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

As discussed earlier, employees will always assess whether there is organisational justice in every decision made in their organisation. If, for example, they perceive organisational justice to be in place, they will become motivated and committed to their organisation (Luthra & Jain, 2012). The concept of motivation is described by Locke and Latham (2006) as internal factors that impel action and external factors that can act as inducements to action. According to Kandula (2006), motivational theories underpin the structure and content of performance management strategies, interventions and drivers. Kandula (2006)

further argues that, unless the motivational chemistry of human beings is rightly understood and managed effectively, no performance could ever be successful. Therefore, performance excellence comes from people who are well motivated. Although there are several motivational theories in the literature, the two theories that support performance management are the goal-setting and expectancy theories (Atkinson & Shaw, 2006). Accordingly, a brief discussion of each follows.

### **2.10.1 Goal-setting theory**

At the heart of the goal-setting theory lies the 'goal-setting motivational force' (Locke & Latham, 2002). The core premise of the theory is that some people perform better at work tasks than others because they have different performance goals. According to Locke and Latham (2002), if goals are specific, they will increase employees' desire to exert more effort in order to achieve them. This means that despite their abilities and experience, employees who set goals will focus on the achievement of those goals. This theory is based on three basic arguments. First, individuals have different goals. Second, people only act to achieve their goals if there is a chance of success. Third, the value of the goal affects the level of motivation (Locke & Latham, 2002). The goal-setting theory is in line with the 1954s concept of 'management by objectives' of Peter Drucker, which became popular in the 1960s. According to Drucker, the most important elements of management by objectives are goal specificity, participative decision making, and explicit performance period and performance feedback (Sah, 2012; The Economist, 2009). By implication, individual performance goals are derived from overall organisational goals (Aguinis, 2013); therefore, it is important that organisational goals be shared by all members of the organisations. This will result in employees internalising these goals and eventually making them their own.

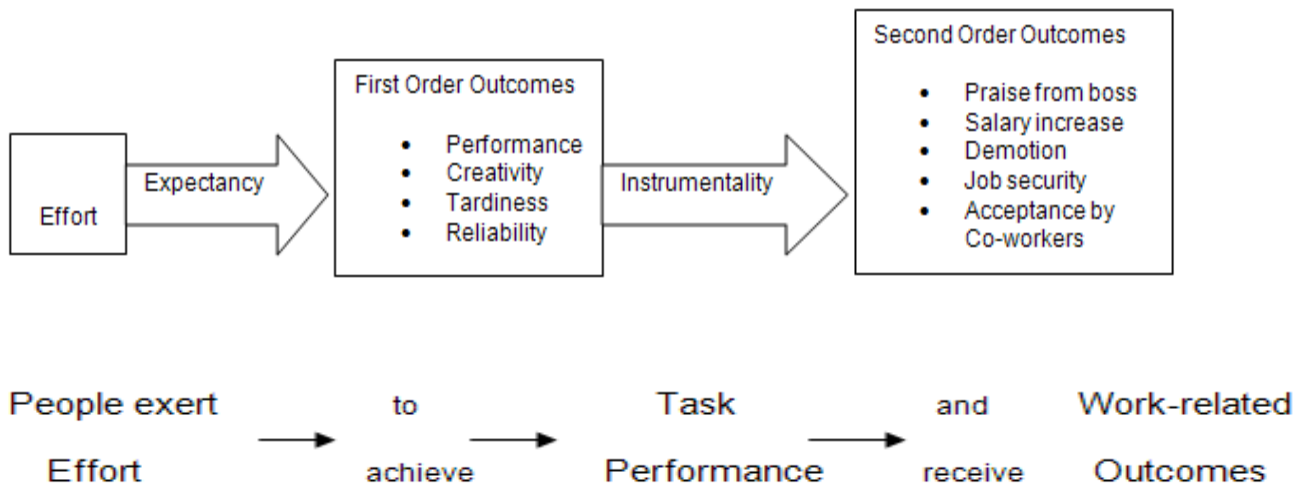
The goal-setting theory further suggests that not only does assigning specific goals to individuals or teams result in enhancement of performance, but that, enhancing goal acceptance through employee involvement; and increasing the challenge or difficulty of goals leads to increased motivation and improved performance (Locke & Latham, 2002). This implies that employees' job content should be challenging in order to motivate them to strive for excellence. The main components of the goal-setting theory are that there must be optimal levels of challenge, goal clarity and

feedback. According to this theory, people who participate in setting goals are likely to be more motivated to achieve them than those who are given goals created for them (Locke & Latham, 2002). Therefore, for a performance management to be effective, not only managers but also individuals and teams should be involved in the setting of performance goals.

### **2.10.2 Expectancy theory**

The concept of expectancy was originally contained in the valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory, which was formulated by Vroom in 1964. In this theory, Vroom maintains that employees consciously decide whether to perform or not at their job. This decision solely depends on the employee's motivation level, which in turn depends on three factors of valence, instrumentality and expectancy. Valence refers to value, meaning the attractiveness of the outcomes. Instrumentality refers to the degree to which improved job performance is expected to lead to desired outcomes, in other words, the belief that if we do one thing, it will lead to another. Expectancy entails the degree to which increased effort is perceived to lead to increased job performance, in other words the probability that action or effort will lead to an outcome.

According to Vroom (1964), whenever individuals choose between alternatives that involve uncertain outcomes, it seems clear that their behaviour is affected not only by their preferences among these outcomes, but also by the degree to which they believe these outcomes to be possible. Expectancy is a momentary belief concerning the likelihood that a particular act will be followed by a particular outcome. The expectancy theory is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.



**Figure 2.1: Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964)**

The first-order outcome in the diagram is the behaviour that results directly from the effort an employee expends on the job; while a second-order outcome is anything good or bad that results from a first-order outcome. This theory is also supported by a recent survey including 500 companies, which revealed that performance management systems are more effective when results are directly tied to the reward system (Aguinis, 2013).

Therefore, the greater the value of a set of rewards, and the higher the probability that receiving each of these rewards depends upon effort, the greater the effort that will be put forth in a given situation.

## 2.11 WHY ARE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS NOT EFFECTIVE?

Despite the popularity of performance management systems, dozens of studies indicate that organisations are not managing employee performance very well (Aguinis *et al.*, 2011). The authors further stress that while there is general agreement that performance management systems are important and effective when executed well, there is frustration that they tend to be executed less well than they should. The results of the study conducted by Holland (2006) revealed that only three out of ten employees believed that their company's performance-review system actually helped them improve their performance towards the achievement of organisational goals. According to Aguinis (2013), some organisations introduce

performance management systems and abandon them later because of them not being efficient.

There are many reasons cited in the literature for performance management not working effectively. First, a study conducted by Rao (2008) revealed that the performance-planning process, that is, individual goal setting and communication, is not seen as a serious exercise at all levels, leading to role ambiguities. Therefore, employees find it difficult to achieve the expected performance standards if they are not clear to them.

Second, Aguinis (2013) found that there are many competing projects and usually a scarcity of resources in organisations, and as a result some organisations may be reluctant to implement a performance management system. This is because performance management systems are perceived to consume many resources (particularly time by supervisors). As a result, organisations must focus and give first priority to the perceived value-adding systems. Accordingly, Aguinis (2013) suggests that for performance management to be effective, the following three things should be applied: The system should (1) be the organisation's and the unit's priority; (2) build support from all employees, not only from top management, and (3) provide tools to employees (e.g. motivation and developmental resources).

Third, the performance management process involves human beings, yet human beings are subjective in nature and will always rely on their personal intuition when making judgement (Aguinis, 2013; Boachie-Mensah & Seidu, 2012). Further, Milkovich and Newman (2002), Levy and Williams (2004) and Aguinis (2013) argue that in general, raters' memories are fallible and their ratings are done according to their own sets of preferences, expectations and relationships with employees and personal objectives.

Fourth, Brudan (2010) is of the opinion that performance management systems fail because they generally apply command and control thinking; that is, they emphasise directing employees on what to do and how to do it which is the approach of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Brudan (2010), following the approach of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in

the interconnected world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has negative implications to organisations.

Fifth, according to Roberts *et al.* (2005) as well as Haines and St-Onge (2011), the performance management system emphasises the control/monitoring of employees. They warn that overemphasis on control (monitoring) may be read as distrust by employees, which can set up a self-fulfilling cycle that produces the very behaviour it is designed to prevent. These authors continue to argue that too much monitoring may raise frustration for employees, damaging motivation as well as information sharing. Accordingly, these authors recommend performance management systems that balance autonomy (promoting independence and creativity) and control.

Sixth, Luthra and Jain (2012) found that performance management systems fail because they cannot identify and acknowledge good performers. For example, in a study conducted by Gallup in 2010, employees in several different industries across India were asked for their opinions on various aspects of performance management systems (Luthra & Jain, 2012) The findings revealed that employees, especially those with three to ten years' experience in an organisation, strongly feel that most performance management systems are not capable of distinguishing superior performance. Therefore, so far it is too premature to conclude that performance management will lead to the improvement of the performance of both employees and the organisation.

Aguinis (2013) further identified several common rater errors that also pose a challenge to the effectiveness of performance management systems, specifically during the performance-review/appraisal phase. These errors include halo error, where raters assume that if employees perform good in one dimension they will automatically perform good in others; leniency error, where managers try to avoid defensiveness from ratees by assigning a high rating to everyone; central tendency, where managers assign everyone average scores; and severity error, where managers rate everyone very low. Due to the negative impact these errors have on employees' perceptions of their organisation's performance management systems, researchers have investigated alternative rating formats, controls for rater error and various methods of rater training, but had only limited success (Aguinis, 2013;

Thurston, 2012). Therefore, performance evaluation will still be viewed as subjective by employees, resulting in employees lacking trust in their performance management systems. However, Aguinis (2013) emphasises that the performance review should be 'confidential', meaning no one may know who received what rating, as this could help building trust among employees in their performance management system.

## **2.12 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS**

Several frameworks of performance management are found in the literature. Most of them focus on a predictable set of variables involving some variation on establishing performance goals for employees, assessing performance and providing feedback (Gruman & Saks, 2011). Depending on the type of the organisation, if managed well, each model can improve organisational performance. Three performance management frameworks that integrate individual performance and organisational performance are discussed in this section, namely Rockart's model of managing organisational performance (Rockart, 1979), the BSC performance management model (Kaplan & Norton, 1996), as well Aguinis's performance management model (Aguinis, 2013). These frameworks are embraced in many performance management processes in the literature.

### **2.12.1 Rockart's model of managing organisational performance: Critical success factors and key performance indicators**

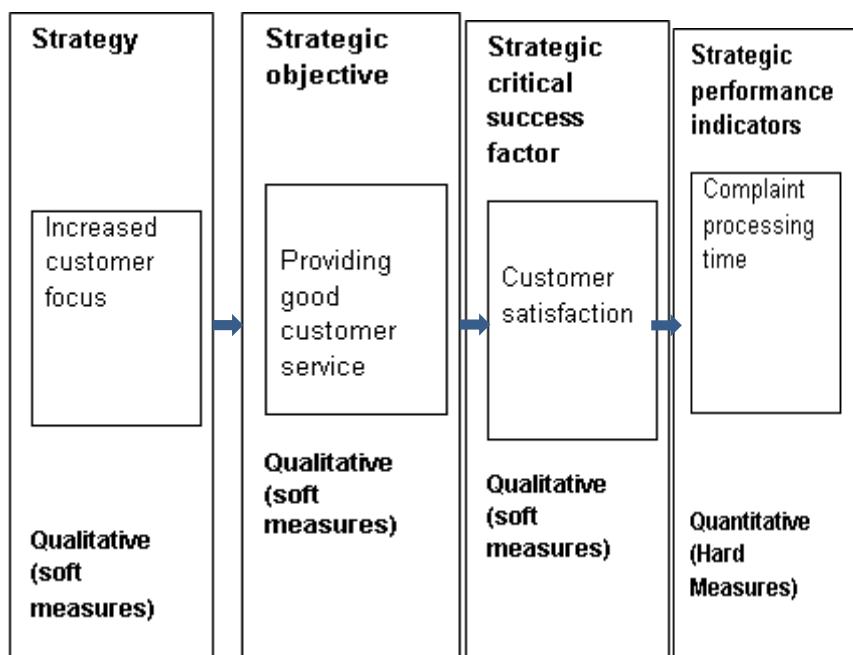
Intangible assets such as patents, trademarks and human capital are increasingly seen as major value sources of organisations, in addition to the more traditional, intangible assets such as physical capital and financial capital (De Waal, 2007). The exclusion of these sources when managing organisational performance created problems to such organisations. For instance, organisations will only realise at the end of the financial year that their profits have dropped. According to De Waal (2007), the introduction of Rockart's CSFs and KPIs provided a solution to this problem, as they combine non-financial leading indicators with financial lagging indicators in one system. In this way, they offer management a balanced overview of the organisation's performance and a means to check whether the organisation's strategy is being executed successfully. By doing so, areas that need attention can be detected early and improved.

Rockart (1979:85) defines CSFs as follows:

“CSFs thus, are, for any business the limited number of areas in which results, if they are satisfactory, will ensure successful competitive performance for the organisation. They are the few areas where “things must go right” for the business to flourish. If results in these areas are not adequate, the organisation’s efforts for the period will be less than desired. As a result, the CSFs are areas of activity that should receive constant and careful management attention. The current status of performance in each area should be continually measured and that information should be made available successfully”.

From this definition, it becomes apparent that organisational performance should be continuously monitored so that deviations can be corrected early. It implies that employee performance should be monitored closely and that feedback should be provided on a continuous basis.

An example of the application of the concepts of CSFs and KPIs is illustrated in Figure 2.2.



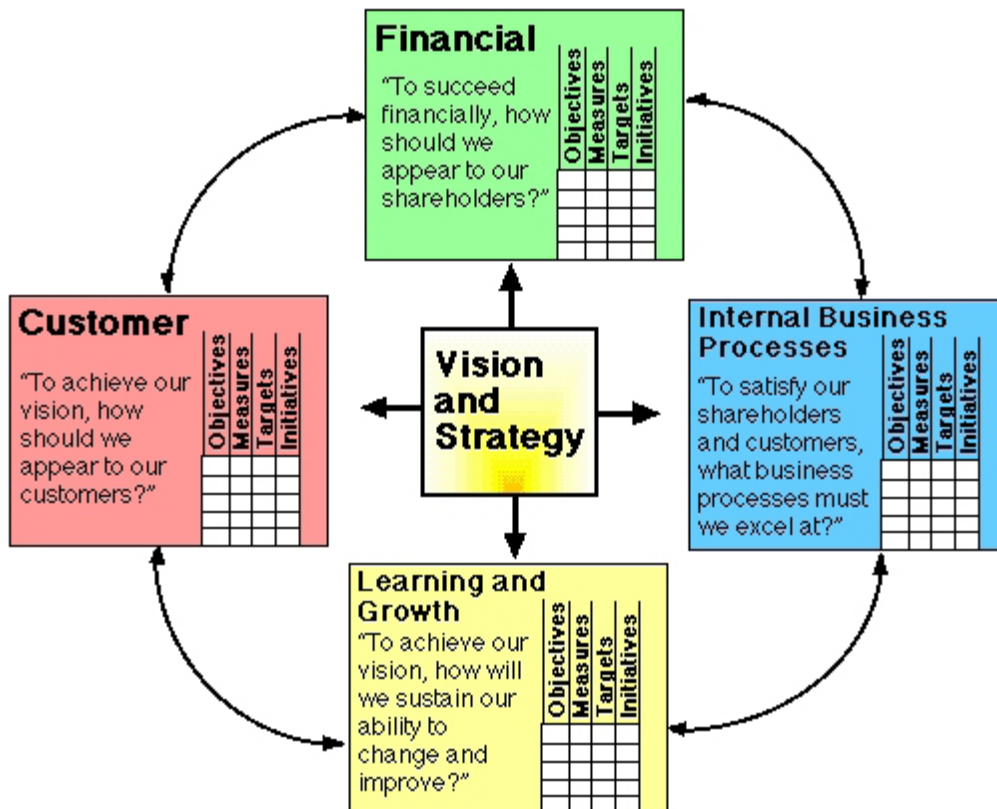
**Figure 2.2: Rockart' CSFs and corresponding KPIs (De Waal, 2007:30)**



In general, as can be seen from the above figure, a CSF provides a qualitative description of an element of the strategy in which the organisation has to excel in order to be successful. The CSF in the figure is customer satisfaction. It will not be easy to know if the organisation is achieving this if measuring indicators are not in place. Therefore, a KPI has to be stated in line with the CSF. This will help to quantify the CSF. This means the soft measures (CSFs) are translated into hard measures (KPIs) in order to get indications as to whether the organisation is achieving set objectives or not. The use of CSFs and KPIs enables measurement, and thus control of strategic objectives. Therefore, if performance indicators that measure the execution of the strategy and the creation of value are not included in the performance management process, it will remain unclear whether strategic objectives and value creation are being achieved. Importantly, individual and team performance should be in line with the organisational CSFs and KPIs. In other words, employees should know exactly what roles their jobs play in an endeavour to achieve organisational strategy.

### **2.12.2 The BSC performance management model**

The BSC is a performance management framework that enables the organisation to translate its vision and strategy into implementation, working from four perspectives, namely innovation, or product/services/people (including learning and development of people), effectiveness of internal processes, experiences of customers and financial performance (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). It links vision and strategy to employees' everyday actions by translating the abstract strategy into clear strategic priorities and initiatives, and relating these to clear tangible strategic outcomes the organisation and its employees have to strive for: satisfied shareholders, delighted customers, effective and efficient processes and motivated staff. In this way, the BSC makes strategy everyone's job, as it should be. Another point is that more and more company values come from intangibles, yet the traditional financial system cannot convey the importance of these intangibles, such as people, processes and innovation, to senior executives and frontline employees. Research has shown that organisations that use a BSC approach tend to outperform organisations without a formal approach to strategic performance management (Advanced Performance Institute, 2012). The BSC framework is depicted in Figure 2.3 below.



**Figure 2.3: The balanced scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1996:76)**

A brief description of each perspective in the BSC follows.

- The *innovative (growth and learning) perspective* measures how often an organisation introduces new products, services or (production) techniques. In this way, the organisation makes sure it does not become complacent, but continuously renews itself. Sometimes organisations include people aspects in this perspective, such as development. These are used to measure the wellbeing, commitment and competence of people in the organisation.
- The *internal (or process) perspective* measures the effectiveness of the processes by which the organisation creates value. It measures how effective processes are. According to Kaplan and Norton (1996), internal process refers to the lifecycle of a project from launch (when a customer need was recognised) to completion (when the customer need has been satisfied). This precedes the customer perspective, because efficient processes make it

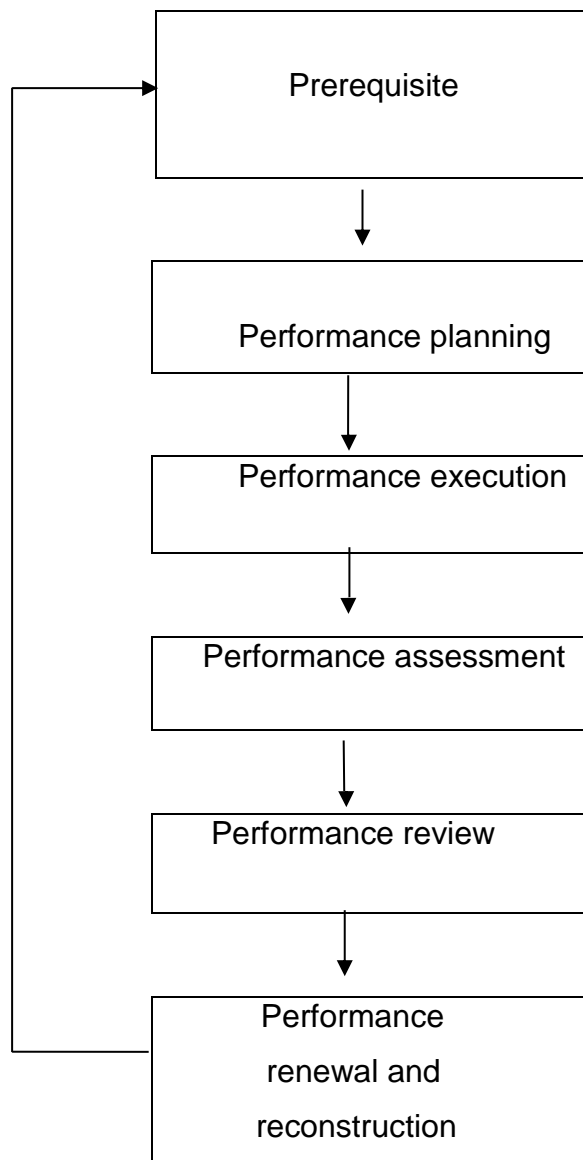
possible for an organisation to stay competitive, or to become more competitive.

- The *customer perspective* measures performance in terms of how the customer experiences value by the organisation. It comes after the internal processes, because effective and efficient processes enable the organisation to provide better services to its customers.
- The *financial perspective* measures the bottom line, such as growth, return on investment and the other traditional measures of business performance. It comes after the customer perspective, because higher appreciation by customers translate into higher financial results.

It needs to be noted that in different organisations the perspective and the leading indicators can be different; however, the idea of the BSC is to provide a 'balanced' set of indicators that allows an organisation to measure the cause and effect chain by which customer and shareholder value are created. A lot of value is created by people working on and in processes to satisfy customers and produce financial results. Thereafter managers must be able to measure and monitor each perspective's value creation to effectively manage the business. Therefore, the BSC model of performance management allows companies to create a truly integrated set of strategic objectives on a single page (Advanced Performance Institute, 2012).

### **2.12.3 Aguinis's performance management model**

Aguinis (2013) stresses that performance management is a continuous process involving several components that are closely related to one another, and that poor implementation of any of them has a negative impact on performance management as a whole. According to Aguinis (2013), the performance management process provides a clear understanding to individuals as to what they have to achieve and how it will be measured, and clear directions about the kinds of behaviours people must have to perform their duties to the levels that are acceptable by the organisation and which can be measured. Aguinis's performance management model is illustrated in Figure 2.4 below.



**Figure 2.4: Aguinis's performance management model (Aguinis, 2013:39)**

A brief description of each performance management stage is given below:

***Stage 1: Prerequisites***

The two prerequisites before performance management can be implemented are knowledge of the organisation's mission and strategic goals, and knowledge of the job in question. Here employees receive some clarification on the mission and vision of the organisation, as well as organisational goals. Employees are also enlightened on their exact role to play in order to help the organisation achieve its goals. This can

be done by providing employees with clear job descriptions that flow from organisational goals.

### ***Stage 2: Performance planning***

This step involves a meeting between the supervisor and the employee in the beginning of a performance management cycle, where they will discuss and agree upon what needs to be done and how it should be done. This step also includes a discussion of results and behaviours, as well as a developmental plan. From this stage, employees receive clarity of what their organisation expects of them. Ideally, this stage should link individual and organisational goals.

### ***Stage 3: Performance execution***

In this step the employee is striving to produce the results and display the behaviours agreed upon earlier as well as work on developmental needs. Both the employer and the employees play an important role in this stage. The employer should ensure that employees have the necessary skills and ability to perform as well as the required resources. On the other hand, employees should put in efforts towards the achievement of organisational goals.

### ***Stage 4: Performance assessment***

In the assessment phase, both the employees and the manager are responsible for evaluating the extent to which the desired behaviours are being displayed, and whether the desired results have been achieved. This also includes an evaluation of the extent to which the goal stated in the development plan has been achieved. This stage generally monitors whether employees are on the right track or not. If not, necessary initiatives to rectify the situation should be applied.

### ***Stage 5: Performance review***

This stage is the cornerstone of the performance management system (Gruman & Saks, 2011). It involves the meeting between employees and the manager (or a panel) to review their performance. This meeting is usually called the appraisal meeting or discussion. In this stage employees receive feedback on their performance. Good performers are rewarded at this stage. In some organisations

good performers receive a once-off bonus or are moved to a new salary notch, while in others a reward is continuous, for example an employee may be promoted.

### ***Stage 6: Performance renewal and reconstruction***

This is the final stage of performance management and it is identical to the performance-planning stage. Correctional measures are taken where necessary to ensure that deficiencies are dealt with before the new cycle begins. At this stage top management should re-evaluate organisational goals and ask questions such as: Are they realistic? Are they achievable? Are they accurately measurable? These questions should cascade down to business unit, team and individual level.

The three frameworks all follow a holistic approach. All three models emphasise the consideration of all processes of the organisation when managing performance and acknowledging that all these processes and systems add value to the achievement of organisational strategy, and ultimately the bottom line.

## **2.13 THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE CASE UNIVERSITY**

In order to manage individual and organisational performance in the case university, the following phases take place (Unisa, 2008):

### ***Phase 1: Performance planning***

The employee and direct line manager jointly develop the employee's performance agreement, stating the objectives, activities, measures and targets that the employee should pursue to achieve his/her unit's performance targets for the year. The agreement is signed by both the employee and the direct line manager (chair of department).

### ***Phase 2: Performance implementation, monitoring and development***

The employee implements his/her performance agreement, using management methods, systems, procedures and university infrastructure. Progress against the performance measures and targets recorded in the agreement is monitored on a regular basis.

**Phase 3: Performance review**

A half-yearly formative performance review is conducted. In instances where the agreed performance targets cannot be achieved within the required timeframes with the resources provided or where a change in circumstances resulted in the original performance targets no longer being valid, a process of re-planning and reformulation of more realistic performance targets should be entered into at this stage.

**Phase 4: Performance assessment**

At the end of the 12-month cycle, the employee's performance is summatively assessed and translated into a performance rating on a five-point rating scale.

**Phase 5: Integrated performance management system rating scale**

Numeric ratings are allocated to each employee on a five-point Likert scale.

The five phases in the performance management system at the case university are more or less the same as those in Aguinis's performance management model discussed above. Further, the academic staff at the case university are rated based on KPAs. These KPAs are equivalent to the CSFs in Rockart's model discussed earlier. There are four KPAs for academic staff, namely teaching and learning, research, community engagement and academic citizenship. To measure these KPAs, KPIs are assigned to each. For example, the research KPA is measured according to the number of research outputs (articles published in academic journals, as stated in the Research and Innovation Policy), the community engagement KPA is measured according to the number of community projects in which an academic is involved, the academic citizenship KPA is measured according to the number of professional bodies of which an academic staff member is an active member and participation in the committees of these bodies. The teaching and learning KPA is measured according to how often an academic staff member uses different teaching techniques such as the internet and Twitter to communicate with students. Adherence to deadlines as well as increased student pass rates are also used to measure the performance of academic staff members.

The emphasis on organisational vision and strategy is the guiding principle in the implementation of the performance management system at the case university, which is the core premise of the three performance management frameworks discussed earlier, namely the BSC, the Rockart model as well as Aguinis's performance management model.

## **2.14 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

In this chapter the researcher reviewed the concept of performance management across sectors, its origins and evolution, different studies to examine its success, as well as different frameworks to conduct performance management. Some authors trace performance management from the ancient history of organisations, while some view it to be in an infancy stage. However, it is arguably the most controversial topic in businesses today. There has been an enormous amount of research conducted on performance management, making it one of the most praised, criticised and debated HR management practices. Despite the benefits of performance management systems emphasised in the literature, there are also challenges. A considerable body of literature emphasises a positive relationship between effective performance management systems and organisational culture and commitment. For employees to perform and be committed to their organisations, motivation is required. The two motivational theories underlying performance are the goal-setting and expectancy theories. Both theories emphasise that highly motivated employees are good performers. The goal-setting theory stresses the importance of involving employees when setting goals, while the expectancy theory stresses the importance of rewards in motivating employees to perform. There are several models of performance management that are emphasised in the literature. Organisations can choose the one suitable and appropriate to the type of their business. Performance management systems are only effective if the systems chosen link the performance of individuals and teams to those of the entire organisation.

Chapter 3 reviews the implementation of performance management in HEIs, how it is implemented as well as how it is received and perceived by the academic staff.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the literature review is continued. In the first section of this chapter, theoretical perspectives of performance management, specifically in higher education, are outlined. Performance management is rooted in the private sector and was transferred to the public sector (Flaninken, 2009; Furnham, 2004; Parsons & Slabbert, 2001). It now extends to universities. Therefore, this chapter seeks to report on the effectiveness of performance management in higher education, its impact on the academic staff work motivation as well the perceptions of the academic staff of the implementation of performance management in their institutions.

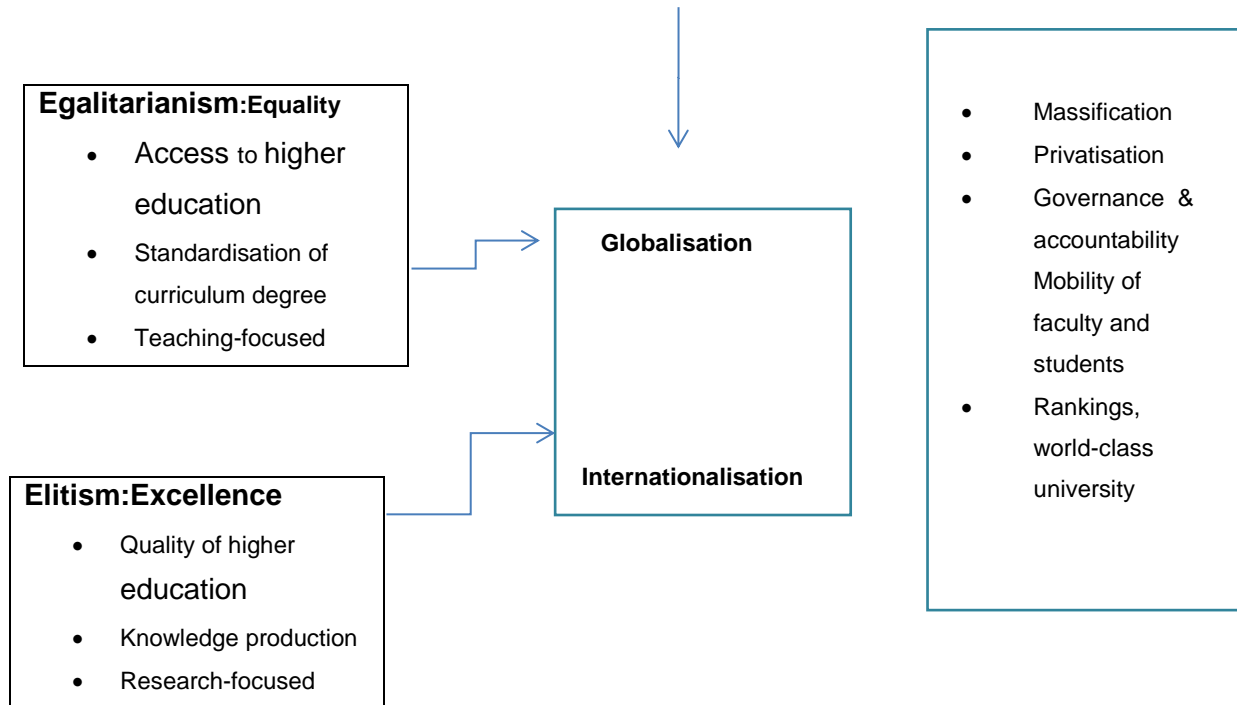
#### **3.2 THE CHANGING FACE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

The world of higher education and the context in which higher education plays a significant role are changing (Yemini, 2012). The changes involve new ways in which universities manage themselves and carry out their core activities, the construction of new professional identities and the adaptation of existing values and norms to new circumstances. "The academy, that once-protected sanctuary of research, discovery, teaching and learning, is now constantly threatened by the very society that once bestowed its lofty rank upon it" (Montez, 2004:586). According to Ruben (2004) and Shin and Harman (2009), the higher education 'arena' comprises institutions that receive decreased funding, are hounded with increased demands for accountability and experience declining public support, recognition and appreciation. The results are a compendium of problems: increased tuition, crowded classrooms, outdated facilities, unprepared graduates, inaccessible faculty and inappropriate courses (Ruben, 2004; Shin & Harman, 2009). In China the growing prominence of the 'privateness' in education finance and provision has intensified the problems of education inequalities (Mok & Lo, 2007; Shin & Harman, 2009). According to these authors, the Chinese government has decreased its subsidy to public universities. This resulted in first, the increase of private HEIs and second, public HEIs embarking

on revenue-generating projects, in other words, making profit. Further, in the United Kingdom (UK), the increasing influence of market thinking has also been detected in the way university research funding has been allocated, as grant distribution has been focused more and more on economic impact (Mok & Lo, 2007; Shin & Harman, 2009). Therefore the universities manage the academic staff members' performance to ensure that more revenue is generated.

Globalisation played a big role in bringing about changes in higher education, which were discussed earlier. Although there are many different definitions of globalisation, the higher education-related definition of globalisation provided by Evans, Pucik, and Björkman (2011) is used in this chapter. Evans *et al.* (2011:99) define globalisation of higher education as “the widening, deepening and speeding up interconnectedness of universities within the global world”. According to Shin and Harman (2009), higher education is at the forefront of globalisation in the knowledge-based economy in which knowledge is the main determinant of economic competitiveness. Teichler (2009) and Meyer, Bushney and Ukpere (2011) note that in globalised societies, cross-border regional blocks began to emerge collectively to respond to global markets. Some examples of moving towards a more global approach to higher education have emerged in several countries. Good examples are European developments, particularly the Bologna Process, which aimed to develop the European higher education area to have a common structure of awards in order to promote the mobility of students and graduates. Another example is the Lisbon Declaration, which has provided mechanisms to enhance cross-border recognition of university qualification (Keeling, 2006; Shin & Harman, 2009). An example in South Africa is the University of Cape Town, which has been well established as the top university in Africa, mainly because of the fact that it is the leading research university in the country (Stanz, 2010). In addition, many universities often invite international lecturers to present classes in South Africa, and some of these efforts have developed into full exchange programmes for students and staff. Also, some business schools such as that of the University of the Witwatersrand and the Gordon Institute of Business Science take students on study tours to different countries, where they visit leading international business schools and companies (Meyer *et al.*, 2011).

To add to the changes in higher education discussed above, Shin and Harman (2009) summarised the theoretical frame of change in higher education, as presented in Figure 3.1 below.



**Figure 3.1: Theoretical frame of new challenges in higher education (Shin & Harman, 2009:3)**

From Figure 3.1 it becomes clear that considerable changes in higher education occurred due to the factors in the middle box, namely globalisation and internationalisation. According to Altbach and Knight (2007), globalisation and internationalisation are related, but not the same thing. While globalisation is the context of economic and academic trends that are part of the reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, internationalisation includes the policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions – and even individuals – to cope with the global academic environment (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Specific initiatives for internationalisation include branch campuses, cross-border collaborative arrangements, programmes for international students and establishing English-medium programmes (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Davidson, 2009; Hudzik, 2011). All these initiatives imply that academic staff should embrace international students, which places an extra burden

on their shoulders, as their workload also increases accordingly due to these initiatives.

Shin and Harman (2009) discuss the key elements of the model in Figure 3.1 as follows:

Student enrolment has been growing rapidly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, largely as a result of the elimination of legal and economic barriers to enable lower socio-economic classes to participate in higher education (this is highlighted in the Egalitarianism box in Figure 3.1). In South Africa this element was emphasised through participation and inclusion of those who were previously excluded (Council on Higher Education [CHE], 2010). This helped to alleviate skill shortages and contributes to the country's wealth creation, but increased the workload for academics.

The trend toward privatisation is accelerating, with growing numbers of policymakers perceiving higher education in terms of private goods; therefore, policymakers have begun to apply market principles and consumer payments as basic principles of the higher education market (this occurred due to factors in the middle box in Figure 3.1, namely globalisation and internalisation). This trend implies that HEIs are managed like private companies. All the staff, including the academics, must be monitored in their jobs. This led to the introduction of performance management systems in higher education.

In emphasising accountability and the quality of education, higher education governance has been experiencing major changes, with moves from a top-down approach to a bottom-up approach and from regulation to evaluation. This means that HEIs have been given powers to set their own policies and make decisions on their own.

As students and faculties move from one university to another and/or from one country to another, mobility has become an issue. In ranking surveys, the number of international students has become an important indicator of institutional competitiveness (this is due to globalisation, showed in the middle box in Figure 3.1).

With massification, HEIs compete with one another to attract qualified students, faculties and resources. The competition is enhanced with the publication of ranking reports (this occurs due globalisation and internalisation, shown in the middle boxes in Figure 3.1).

According to Hudzik (2011), professional internalisation manifests through cross-border collaborations in research among academic staff. Moreover, staff internalisation takes place when universities across the globe invite international lecturers to present classes in their home countries (Stantz, 2010). This places pressure on local academics to host the visiting international lecturers, as it is an extra workload.

The issues of massification, internationalisation, diversification and marketisation of higher education discussed above are also emphasised by Postiglione (2009) and Hong and Songan (2011). These authors further stress that these issues can be seen as both threats and challenges to higher education, but they also provide opportunities for designing the future. For example, the internalisation of students and staff will lead to more knowledge of other countries' successful strategies (e.g. technological advancement and economic strengths) that can be imitated by a home country.

In response to the issues discussed above, it becomes critical for HEIs, particularly in developing countries serving as repositories of knowledge and human capital, to innovate and overcome these issues, and to contribute to economic development (Postiglione, 2009). As a result, the top management in HEIs embark on monitoring and managing the performance of their staff in general, including academic staff. This is done with a view to encourage quality in teaching and increased research outputs. In other words, HEIs became more 'entrepreneurial', and research in these institutions has been 'commercialised' as a result of international competition (CHE, 2010; Sawyerr, 2004). This means that the same principles of managing the private sector, such as introducing performance management systems, are now applied in the public sector. CHE (2010) also noted the emphasis of performativity, efficiency and executivism in university management that imposes control, surveillance and compliance, which are strong signs of 'managerialism'. According to CHE (2010),

proponents of managerialism believe that the voice of command that has brought so much success to capitalist production in industry is the only answer for the higher education sector. Clark (1998) is very supportive of the view of management and strategic development of HEIs. Clark (1998) further contends that the entrepreneurial response offers a formula for institutional development and gives universities better means for redefining their reach – to include more useful knowledge, to move more flexibly over time from one programme emphasis to another and finally to build an organisational identity and focus. In contrary, other scholars view changes in higher education differently. A recent study revealed that academic staff in developing countries saw less benefits in performance-monitoring approach compared to academic staff in more developed economies (Postiglione, 2009). Within the walls of higher education and opposing the quick-fix approach are those who hold fast to the scholarly tradition and who reject such performance-monitoring strategies (Shishkina, 2008). This means, academics themselves generally see a business-like approach to running a university as unacceptable. According to the academics, this approach is not in their own interest and conducive to the security of their jobs, and they claim the public good as a main justification for it (Shishkina, 2008). In other words, there is serious resistance to performance-monitoring strategies on the part of academia. With such resistance, academics are less likely to accept any mechanism aiming to monitor and manage their performance, such as performance management systems.

### **3.3 TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Just as in other countries, change is also inevitable for HEIs in South Africa. ‘External’ forces are exerting more pressure to change than do internal pressures to stay the same (Hill, 2010; Shishkina, 2008; Yemini, 2012). The general public has become increasingly aware that South Africa’s global competitiveness depends on expanding access to higher education while increasing the success of those who enrol at colleges and universities. According to CHE (2010), South African higher education received unprecedented attention from the larger society, and it is still facing unprecedented challenges. Since 1994, government’s support of higher education has been significant. The funding of universities has been on an upward trend, from R11 billion in 2006 to R26 billion in 2013 (Higher Education South Africa

[HESA], 2014). This is the highest rates of public investment in education in the world (SAinfo reporter, 2013). More funding is provided to education, not only in terms of direct funding to institutions, but also in terms of support for participants from those populations normally excluded from higher education (Siemens & Matheos, n.d.). For example, there are now more black students in higher education. In 1993, nearly half of all students at HEIs were white, but since 1994, black African enrolments have nearly doubled, growing by 91% (or 4.4% a year), while overall enrolments have grown by 41% (or 2.3% a year). In response to the increase in enrolments the decision has been made by the South African government to build two more universities in the Mpumalanga and Northern Cape provinces (The Presidency, 2012). In general, specific changes that manifested in South Africa between 1994 and 2004 include the following:

- The first major change relates to the overall restructuring of the higher education system. A programme of government-mandated mergers reduced the number of institutions from 36 universities (21) and technikons (15) to 22 new institutions consisting of universities (11), universities of technology (5) and comprehensive institutions (6). More than 100 teacher-training colleges were closed and a limited number were ‘incorporated’ into universities or technikons. In short, 306 separate institutions for post-school education were radically reduced to at best 72 remaining institutions – not counting the restructuring of nursing and agricultural colleges – which in the researcher’s view, due to skills shortages in South Africa, was not a good idea. This increased the workload of academic staff, as student numbers grew in all institutions.
- The second major change in the higher education system was the considerable growth in private higher education, which has challenged, if not undermined, the public higher education system just as it was emerging from its apartheid legacy (this means, education access was only possible for the privileged). This unforeseen expansion of private higher education has created political, policy and legal dilemmas regarding the appropriate nature and degree of governmental action in response to what has become a powerful, transnational phenomenon in the post-Cold War period. The

increase in private higher education led to intensified competition among the private and public HEIs, which created intensified monitoring systems such as performance management to ensure excellence in higher education.

- The third major change has been the emergence of new models of delivery in higher education. It is no longer possible to clearly distinguish contact and distance education institutions in South Africa, as the former increasingly blurred the distinction in practice between these two forms of education delivery.
- The fourth major change has been the changing value of higher education programmes (the rise of the economic sciences and the decline of the humanities). A study by Yu and Pillay (2011) revealed that there are fewer students enrolling for programmes in the humanities, and that out of this few, there are even fewer who graduate (enrolment decreased from 15 563 to 7 053, graduation decreased from 3 149 to 929 in 2011), leading several universities to retrench humanities academics, restructure humanities faculties and terminate certain humanities programmes – such as foreign languages, music, art and drama.
- The fifth major change has been the changing nature of the academic workplace. In a short period of time, the collegial model that characterised the academic workplace has been replaced with what is often referred to as the new managerialism, characterised by some of the following: a growing emphasis on performance, measurement and accountability; the increasing ethos of competition; a changing language that recasts students as clients and departments as cost centres; and the growing vulnerability of academic and administrative positions as ‘outsourcing’ and ‘efficiencies’ dominate institutional strategy. This new managerialism manifests itself in the creation of new categories of ‘managerial professionals’, which have resulted in a loss of collegiality and new power hierarchies (e.g. executive deans and heads of schools appointed more on managerial than academic grounds). (Jansen, Herman, Matentjie, Morake, Pillay, Sehoole & Weber, 2007; Strathern, 2000; Webster & Mosoetsa, 2002; Wolhuter, 2011)



All of these pressures affected the academia, and HEIs are forced to decide whether and how to respond (Hill, 2010). According to Fuhrman (2004), the new managerialism encourages performance-based accountability, which places the competitive demands for high performance (both research output and throughput) at the top of the universities' priorities. Therefore, HEIs implement performance management systems of some sort to monitor and manage the performance of their academic staff. The changes discussed above imply that because there are now fewer HEIs, there are more students in each institution, while there are fewer academic staff. This results in a greater workload for academic staff.

### **3.4 THE NATURE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING INSTITUTIONS**

Distance teaching is spreading to almost all areas of education and training, as governments have become aware of its potential to deal effectively with many of the problems they face (Khakhar, 2001). It has a major impact on thinking and practice throughout the whole educational system, regarding such critical matters as how students learn, how they can best be taught and how educational resources might be organised more efficiently to deliver the instruction that is needed (United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2002). According to the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE, 2009), ODL refers to an approach to education that seeks to remove all unnecessary barriers to learning, so that as many people as possible are able to take advantage of meaningful learning opportunities throughout their lives. The Unisa Open Distance Learning Policy (2009:2) distinguishes between distance and open learning. This policy defines distance learning as geographical, economic, social, educational and communication distance between student and institution, student and academics, student and courseware and student and peers; while open learning is defined as “an approach to learning that gives students flexibility and choice over what, when, where, at what pace and how they learn”. Open distance education is intended for working people or people who have family responsibilities and are unable to attend fixed classes at a centralised venue in the physical presence of the teacher. According to UNESCO (2002), the barriers that may be overcome by distance learning include not only geographical distance, but also other confining circumstances, such as personal constraints, cultural and social barriers and lack of educational infrastructure.

In order to support open and distance students academically, tutors are employed in such institutions to teach students both face to face and online. This adds more workload on academic staff, as they have to manage these tutors. The increase in the workload of the academic staff has a great implication for the performance management of these academics. However, according to SAIDE (2009), the tutor is just one small part of the whole ODL system. Students in such systems are provided with open educational resources that are freely available on the internet. To students who do not have access to the internet or even for to computers, distance education methods may include printed course materials and the use of the postal service for the submission and return of assignments. These students should still receive full academic support, just like learners at face-to-face institutions. Therefore, academics in such ODL institutions should develop their study material and teach these students by means of different available technologies, such as the internet, Twitter, podcasts and cell phones. As a result, academics in ODL institutions are office-bound with fixed working hours daily. Most of their time is consumed by the development of study material and responding to students' queries during working hours. This has a negative impact on their research output (assessed in the KPA of 'Research' in the performance management form).

### **3.5 MONITORING THE WORK OF ACADEMIC STAFF: A NEW TREND**

Public organisations have been exposed to market pressures that require organisational innovations similar to the changes implemented in private organisations and universities (Hill, 2010; Parsons & Slabbert, 2001; Türk, 2007). This means that ensuring efficiency in higher education has become crucial, which calls for the measuring and monitoring of the academic staff. For centuries academic work was self-defining under the rubric of autonomy and academic freedom (Pityana, 2004). Now, with the introduction of performance management systems, academics are seeing their missions being defined by others and having to respond appropriately to visions set for a variety of purposes, including the pressures of the market economy and the speed of the information society (Pityana, 2004). This is referred to as new public management, which is oriented towards outcomes and efficiency through better management of public budget (Shishkina, 2008; Zeleza,

2012). According to Shishkina (2008), a managerial approach to running a university means substitution of norms of management and governance associated with the public sector. This may pose a challenge to the public sector, which may require serious adjustments to accommodate this managerial approach.

One major pressure on higher education is the demand for greater productivity in the wake of budget constraints, increased enrolments and more explicit social demands placed upon institutions (Parsons & Slabbert, 2001; Montez, 2004). As a result of the demand for greater productivity (such as more research outputs and increased student throughput/graduateness), it became inevitable to bring the work of academics under scrutiny. This led to the introduction of performance management systems to higher education. However, the research revealed that performance management in HEIs is problematic and frustrating, and poses a major challenge both internationally and in South Africa (Mapesela & Strydom, 2004; Osei-Owusu, 2013; Tam, 2008). This view is also supported by Shishkina (2008), who argues that it is useless to try to make a knowledge-producing organisation work as a company, as it would appear as subordination of the university to private interest, which ultimately does not care about the production of knowledge.

Mapesela and Strydom (2004) conducted a study involving three HEIs. In all three cases the introduction and development of a performance management system highlighted tension between collegiality and managerialism. The results of this study also suggested that because of the tension between collegiality and managerialism, typical business approaches to performance management systems will not work in higher education. According to Tam (2008), the introduction of performance management to universities will not work due to the fact that academic work is complex and diverse. On the other hand, Martz, McKenna and Siegall (2001) argue that certainly one of the most controversial issues associated with designing academic performance management systems that can work is determining exactly what scholarly activities would be incorporated into it, and which ones would not. Therefore, for performance management systems to be effective in higher education, typical business performance management models and approaches need to be adapted to the needs and vision of HEIs, and should be aligned with institutional goals.

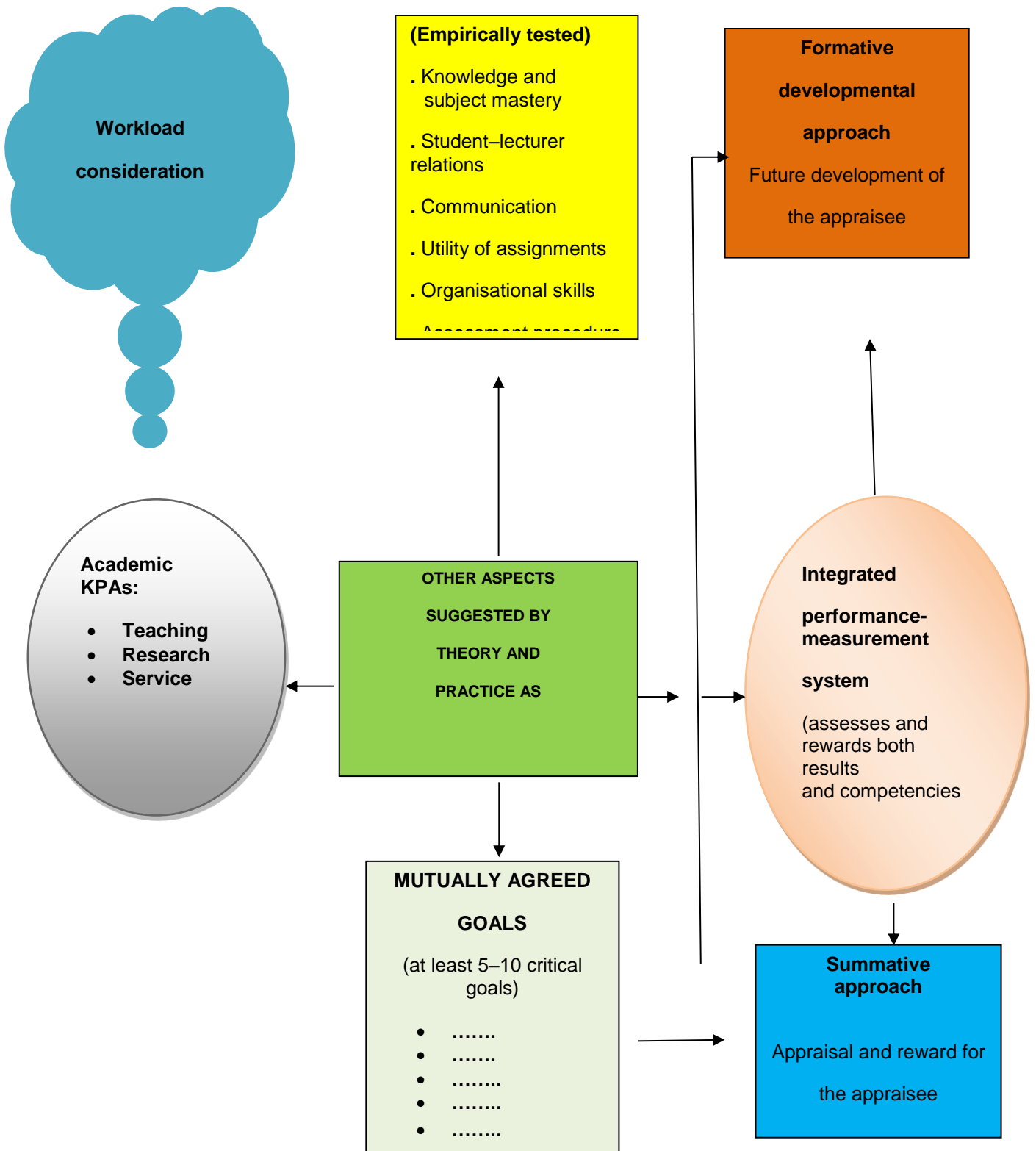
Academics find performance management systems to be lacking validity, that is, they do not measure all they are supposed to measure (Pienaar & Bester, 2007). These authors conducted a study involving academics in the early years of their careers. The respondents emphasised the overemphasis of research over teaching to be one of the dilemmas for academics. They therefore find performance management systems to be barriers for them to get a promotion. Therefore, for performance management systems to be well accepted and trusted by academics, they should accurately and comprehensively embrace a full range of activities or tasks that academic staff members might be required to perform as well as the complex interrelationship between these tasks, as they affect the time to perform them. This was confirmed by the study conducted by Molefe (2010) among 'top' universities in the United States of America (USA), the UK, Nigeria, Australia and South Africa, which revealed that performance management systems are likely to be resisted by academic staff if their performance assessment criteria do not take into account the following broad issues:

- The teaching workload or distribution of the workload between members of departments
- The results of student evaluation based on an acceptable format used by faculties
- Student numbers per course research output with emphasis on accredited output
- Corporate citizenship, which encompasses service to the community without compensation. (Parsons & Slabbert, 2001; Mukamusoni, 2006; Schulze, 2006; Pienaar & Bester, 2007; Türk, 2008; Molefe, 2010).

While many argue that it is counter to the academic culture, others see benefits, such as that performance management can bring about improved performance. For example, Taylor (2001) emphasises that the introduction of performance indicators in an academic institution can motivate its members to work better. This is due to academic staff who value external rewards such as funds or promotions. Taylor (2001) suggests that people who are extrinsically motivated will perform better; however, some people are intrinsically motivated, which means they cannot be

motivated by promotions or money (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Such employees can be motivated by recognition or time away to be spent with family and friends.

Molefe (2012) developed a model that reflects aspects of performance management per se that were empirically tested as important aspects for measuring the work of academics. He furthermore claims that the model also reflects aspects suggested by theory as important to consider for evaluating the performance of lecturing staff at HEIs. The model is illustrated in Figure 3.2 below.



**Figure 3.2: Conceptual model of performance measurement for lecturers (adapted from Molefe, 2012:5265)**

The model in Figure 3.2 suggests that good performance management of lecturers should consider aspects such as lecturers' competencies, including knowledge and subject mastery, communication and student–lecturer relationship; workload; and the development and rewarding of the appraisees. According to this model, if all these aspects are considered, a performance management system for academic staff will be successful in motivating them. However, different individuals can be motivated by different things. Therefore, both financial and non-financial rewards should be considered when rewarding academic staff. The consideration of academics' workload is further supported by the findings of Barrett and Barrett (2008), in whose study the respondents stressed that their workloads are becoming more unmanageable. Moreover, a study by Shahzad, Mumtaz, Hayat and Khan (2010) also found that a reasonable academic workload and academic job satisfaction strongly correlated with academic quality. Therefore, when evaluating the performance of academics, their workload should always be considered.

### **3.6 THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND ITS EFFECT ON ACADEMICS' JOB SATISFACTION**

Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as an enjoyable and positive emotional state that is a result of the evaluation of one's job experience. It refers to employees' satisfaction with the general aspects of the work situation, such as pay, supervision, the organisation as a whole, the job itself, fellow employees and prospects of advancement. It can be measured through employee attitudes, turnover, absenteeism and grievances (Noordine, 2009). Satisfied employees will always endeavour to be loyal to their organisation, willingly align their tasks with organisational goals, and put more effort into achieving these goals. According to Nel, Van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono and Werner (2004), factors affecting job satisfaction can be either personal or organisational. Personal factors include race, gender, educational level, tenure, age and marital status, while organisational factors include work itself, remuneration/pay, supervision, promotion opportunities, co-workers, job status and job level.

Parsons and Slabbert (2001) emphasise that good performance management should accurately and comprehensively describe both the full range of activities or tasks that

an academic staff member might be required to perform and the complex interrelationship between these tasks, as they affect the time to perform them.

Schulze (2006), Flaniken (2009) and Noordine (2009) found in their studies that academic staff are generally satisfied with their jobs. The study conducted by Schulze (2006) identified one main satisfying aspect in academic work to be flexibility of working hours, as this grants academics enough time to do their research; as well as the freedom to do outside work for an additional income. However, while this is true at the residential HEIs, it is not the case with the ODL institutions. Academics at ODL institutions are office-bound and their full-time availability in offices is emphasised in their job descriptions. Their performance review emphasises their full-time availability in the office, at the same time emphasising research outputs. According to Türk (2008) and Pienaar and Bester (2007), this is a serious dilemma that frustrates these academics, as it deprives them of opportunities for promotion.

A study conducted by Rockwell, Furgason and Marx (2000) revealed that faculty time, competencies and incentives to develop and teach over distance are regarded as major challenges (among others) in the implementation of distance education. The respondents in this study felt disconnection between times needed to prepare and deliver distance education courses and time for research. This view is further shared by Schultze (2006) and Shin (2012), who identified the following as issues that pose as dissatisfaction aspects for academics:

- Emphasis on research rather than teaching
- Conflict in time on teaching and research
- Not enough time to carry out research
- The reward systems putting teaching and research in conflict
- The personality of an effective teacher is different from that of an effective researcher
- Time spent doing administration and paper work.

Therefore, for academic staff to be satisfied with their performance management system, the issues mentioned above should be attended to. According to



Mukamusoni (2006), in order to infuse acceptance of performance management systems by academics in ODL institutions, such systems should consider the development of course material as part of their research work and compensate them accordingly.

### **3.7 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

This chapter reviewed the pertinent literature in the areas of changes and pressures in the higher education sector across the globe due to external forces, how these changes and pressures had an impact on South African higher education, the nature of open and distance education, a new trend of managing academic work as well as the influence of performance management systems on academics' job satisfaction. While some studies criticise the implementation of performance management systems in the academia, the proponents of performance management still emphasise its benefits. Some authors still argue that the entrepreneurial response offers a formula for institutional development and gives universities better means for redefining their reach – to include more useful knowledge, to move more flexibly over time from one programme emphasis to another and finally to build an organisational identity and focus.

In the next chapter, the research methodology used to address the objectives of this study is introduced.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this study was to evaluate the perceptions of academic staff at an ODL university regarding the implementation of a performance management system. The overarching research question that guided the study was “What are the experiences and perceptions of academic staff at the ODL university regarding the implementation of a performance management system?”

This chapter discusses the methods used in conducting the present study. Research concepts such as methodology, design, sampling and data collection and analysis are discussed. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the concepts of reliability and validity of data-collection instruments and ethical considerations in research.

#### 4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

Research methodology is defined as a system of explicit rules and procedures upon which research is based and against which claims for knowledge are evaluated (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, (2008). Methodology in research explains the techniques used to acquire and analyse data to create new knowledge (Petty, Thomson & Stew, 2012) and this provides an important basis for knowledge development (Yang, Wang & Su, 2006). An understanding of the research methodology process will therefore assist a researcher in the choice of the most appropriate methodology in order to identify the unit of analysis and employ compatible methods that will provide the intended results. The following section provides a discussion of research philosophy and research design.

##### 4.2.1 Research philosophy

Research philosophy constitutes an important part of the research methodology and provides a researcher with a guide to collect data in an effective and appropriate manner. Most studies in the social sciences are conducted within the framework of an identifiable research philosophy. Ontology is the starting point of all research,

after which one's epistemological and methodological positions logically follow. Blaikie (2000: 8) has described ontology as 'claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other. In short, ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality.' Ontology describes an individual's view (either claims or assumptions) about the nature of truth or reality, and precisely – an objective reality that truly exists, or only a subjective reality, shaped in individuals' minds (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, Jackson & Lowe, 2008; Smith, Flower & Larkin, 2009;).

Ontological assumptions and commitments provide a guide as to the formulation of research questions and how empirical studies are conducted (Bryman & Bell, 2011). On the other hand, interpretive philosophy posits that the complexities surrounding the practice of management and business cannot be reduced to theory formulation or guided by laws such as in the natural sciences (Johnson & Christensen, 2010). This research philosophy plays an important role in order to produce end results from the collected data. The present study adopted a positivist epistemology, which posits that the purpose of theory is to generate hypotheses that can be tested and to generate knowledge through data collection and analysis, which subsequently allow deductions to be made (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Positivism is consistent with this study because it also places considerable emphasis on facts that can be evaluated empirically through the utilisation of quantitative methods – experiments and surveys designs, from which the data collected are statistically analysed (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2006; Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Smith et al, 2009; Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders, Thornhill & Lewis, 2012).

#### **4.2.2 Research design**

Leedy and Ormrod, (2005:4) describe a research design as a means of structuring all the issues involved in planning and executing a research. It is described by Bryman and Bell (2011) as the framework for the collection and analysis of data. According to Leedy and Ormrod, (2005) the research design includes the following: historical research, ethnographic research, descriptive research, experimental research, case study research, explanatory research and exploratory research. This study followed a case study design which Bryman and Bell (2011:59) described as involving "the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case" which could be a

single organisation situated in a particular geographic location. It represents an in depth study of a particular situation rather than a broad statistical survey (Shuttleworth, 2008). This research design is considered most appropriate as the present study was confined to a particular ODL institution. The study followed a quantitative research technique, which adopted cross-sectional research design using a survey research strategy. A cross-sectional research design, according to Bryman and Bell (2011), entails the gathering of data at a single point in time to determine patterns of association, while survey research refers to a method of data collection that utilises questionnaires or interview techniques for recording the verbal behaviour of respondents (Ghuri & Gronhaug, 2010). A survey is an effective tool to obtain opinions, attitudes and descriptions as well as for capturing cause-and-effect relationships. The quantitative research technique quantifies data numerically and usually applies a form of statistical analysis to draw conclusions from the research (Malhotra & Peterson, 2006). The quantitative approach undertaken in conducting this study was through the use of a self-administered web-based questionnaire for primary data collection.

#### **4.3 TARGET POPULATION**

A population is a full set of cases from which a sample can be taken (Welman *et al.*, 2005). It encompasses the total collection of all units of analyses about which the researcher wishes to make some form of conclusions and generalise the results of the study where possible (Salkind, 2012; Welman *et al.*, 2005). For the purpose of this study, a census survey was used. Floyd and Fowler (2013:3) define a census survey as a means of collecting information about every individual in a population. Harding (2006) and Chawla, Chindra and Pandey (2013) further state that the census survey differs from the sample survey in that it collects data from every member of the population, while the sample survey collects data only from some members of the population. In this study, all academics as defined by the ODL institution under survey were approached to participate; thereby arriving at a target population of 1 775.

Chawla *et al.* (2013) identified the following as the advantages and disadvantages of the census survey:

**Advantages:**

- A true measure benchmark is obtained for future studies.
- Detailed information for the-group is collected.

**Disadvantages:**

- Higher costs
- Timeous process
- Difficult to enumerate.

To minimise the disadvantages of this survey method, a web-based questionnaire was used to collect data, which is less expensive and quick to administer (Umbuch, 2004; Misra, Stokols & Marino, 2013;).

#### **4.4 DATA-COLLECTION PROCESS AND MEASURING INSTRUMENT**

##### **4.4.1 Data-collection instrument**

Primary data were collected using a structured self-administered web-based questionnaire. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) stress that one advantage of using a questionnaire to collect data is that respondents can respond to questions with the assurance that their responses will be anonymous, and so they may be more truthful than they would be in a personal interview, particularly when they are talking about sensitive or controversial issues. According to Aguinis (2013), performance management will always be a subjective activity because raters' memories are generally fallible and their ratings are done according to their own sets of preferences, expectations and relationships with employees and personal objectives. It is therefore a sensitive and controversial topic. Consequently, in order to collect data that are trustworthy and reliable, the researcher found a web-based self-structured questionnaire to be the best instrument to use.

##### **4.4.2 Questionnaire design**

The questionnaire used to collect data comprised questions that were measured on a five-point Likert scale. The Likert scale is a variation of the summated rating scale and consists of statements that indicate either a favourable or an unfavourable

attitude to the research subject (Cooper & Schindler, 2001:234; Tustin, Lighelm, Martins & Van Wyk, 2005:408). Each response is given a numerical score reflecting its degree of attitudinal favourableness (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree). The scores of the respondents from a well-defined sample or population can be compared.

The questionnaire comprised five sections (A–E) as follows:

- Section A collected data on the respondents' awareness and understanding of performance management.
- Section B collected data on the role of managers in ensuring the effectiveness of the performance management system.
- Section C collected data on the respondents' satisfaction with performance goals and standard setting.
- Section D collected data on the respondents' satisfaction with performance rating and bonuses.
- Section E collected biographical information.

Each section comprised several questions. A range of answers was set out for each question so that the participants could simply tick the appropriate boxes. The questions were short and simple to understand in order for the measuring instrument to yield a high response rate, as recommended by Terre-Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006).

#### **4.4.3 Reliability and validity**

Reliability in research, according to Sekaran (2003), refers to whether an instrument is consistent, stable and free from error despite fluctuations in terms of the test taker, administrator or conditions under which the test is administered. On the other hand, Leedy and Ormrod (2010) describe validity as the extent to which the instrument measures what it is intended to measure. While reliability is about stability of a measure, validity is concerned with the consistence of measurement (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010). The authors however argue that a valid measure is also reliable, but a reliable measure does not need to be valid. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) explain that validity and reliability of a measuring instrument influence the extent to which a

researcher can learn something about the phenomenon under study. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) further explain that the validity and reliability of an instrument also determine the probability that statistically significant results would be obtained in the data analysis, and also the extent to which meaningful conclusions could be drawn.

#### **4.4.3.1 Reliability of the measuring instrument**

Reliability is the consistency with which a measuring instrument yields a certain result when the entity being measured has not changed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Reliability is measured by repeatedly measuring the variables or constructs in question. According to Malhotra and Peterson (2006), the higher the association between the scores derived through this procedure, the more reliable the scale.

Nunnally (1978), Hair, Black, Balbin, Anderson and Tatham (2006) and Hulland (1999) recommend the following as an acceptable reliability threshold for Cronbach's alpha value:  $\{0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7\}$ . Accordingly, the summary of the Cronbach's alphas that were calculated for each of the four sections of the questionnaire used in this study are presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Summary of the reliability tests**

Reliability	
Scale: ALL VARIABLES	
Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
0.822	7
<b>SECTION A OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE</b>	

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
0.911	11
<b>SECTION B OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE</b>	

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
0.693	8
<b>SECTION C OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE</b>	

Reliability statistic	
Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
0.895	8
<b>SECTION D OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE</b>	

#### **4.4.3.2 Validity of the measuring instrument**

According to Litwin (1995), besides determining the reliability of a scale, it is equally important to assess its validity, or how well it measures what it sets out to measure. Validity basically means “measuring what you think you are measuring” (Field, 2003:2). In other words, it is the degree to which a questionnaire reflects the reality (Howard, 2008). Furthermore, Radhakrishna (2007) asserts that the validity of a questionnaire can be determined by asking a question such as “Is the questionnaire comprehensive enough to collect all the information needed to address the purpose and goals of the study?” The validity of measures is divided into two categories, namely internal and external validity. In research methodology literature, the measure of validity is often considered under either internal or external validity (Gill & Johnson (2010); Yin, 1994). According to Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar and Newton (2002), internal validity is the issue of establishing theoretical territory that goes with the defined construct and ensuring consistency between it and other recognised



constructs. External validity, on the other hand, relates to what extent the findings can be generalised to particular persons, settings and times as well as across types of persons, settings and times (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2010).

An extensive review of existing literature on performance management was undertaken and questionnaire items contained in the measuring instrument were derived from literature. The researcher also consulted several experienced researchers to provide inputs for the development of a good questionnaire. The above steps were undertaken in order to ensure the content validity of the measuring instrument. The questionnaire was also pre-tested in order to further enhance its validity.

#### **4.4.4 Questionnaire pretesting**

No matter how carefully researchers design a data-collection instrument such as a questionnaire; there is always the possibility of errors (Babbie, 2007). Therefore, in order to determine the feasibility of this study as well as the reliability and validity of the measuring instrument, the questionnaire was pre-tested. This was done to ensure that quality data are collected. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), although a pre-test takes some time initially, it ultimately saves time by letting a researcher know which items or approaches will or will not be effective in helping to solve the research problem.

A valid questionnaire helps to collect better-quality data with high comparability, which reduces the effort and increases the credibility of the data (Kazi & Khalid, 2012). Accordingly, the validity of the questionnaire used to collect data in this study was also tested.

Finally, the researcher sent out a questionnaire to 11 academic staff members known by the researcher. The researcher delivered the questionnaires by hand and collected them after a few days. The respondents in the pilot study were selected purposefully in order to make it easy to exclude them when sending the final questionnaire to the respondents in the main study. The researcher therefore removed their email addresses from the list of respondents of the main study.

The item analysis in this pilot study was done with the help of a statistician using the SPSS program. After attending to the minor amendments to the research instrument,

as highlighted by the pilot study, the questionnaire was sent out to the respondents through a Lime Survey.

#### **4.4.5 Response rate**

Non-response has been recognised as a significant problem in survey research, as not every sample member would agree to participate in the research (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Furthermore, the authors note that out of the total number of questionnaires returned by respondents, not all may be useable, as some of the questionnaires may not be fully completed by the respondents. Out of the 1 775 questionnaires that were administered in this study, 492 were returned, out of which only 313 were useable. Using the formula provided by Bryman and Bell (2011), the response rate of this study was calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Number of usable questionnaires / Total sample - unsuitable or uncontactable} \\ & \text{no. of the population X 100} \\ & = 313/1775 - 0 \times 100 = 17.63 \text{ (approx. 18\%)} \end{aligned}$$

The results of this study were therefore drawn from only 18% of the total study population. However, Bryman and Bell (2011) contend that the heterogeneity and homogeneity of the population should be taken into consideration to the extent that a heterogeneous population requires a larger sample size than a homogeneous population. This contention therefore provided support for the response rate (18%) in this study, as the population was homogeneous and therefore a small sample size could be considered as credible and representative of the entire population.

#### **4.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

Descriptive statistics were used to process and analyse the biographic data collected. Descriptive statistics describe the general characteristics of a set or distribution scores to allow the researcher (or the reader of the research report) to get an accurate first impression of “what the data look like” (Salkind, 2012:162). The SPSS program was used to analyse the inferential statistics using the one-sample t-test statistical technique. The main purpose of the statistical analysis in this study was to analyse the experiences and perceptions of academic staff in terms of the implementation of a performance management system in an ODL institution.

## **4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

No matter what paradigm a researcher uses, ethics in research should be an integral part of the research planning and implementation process, and should not be viewed as an afterthought or a burden (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Committing to ethical responsibility was a primary concern of this study. Before conducting this study, the researcher first requested the permission from the Senate Research and Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee of the case university, and the ethical clearance certificate permitting the researcher to conduct this study was granted (see Annexure C). The following key ethical principles, as set out by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, 2012) were also followed in this study:

- Participation in the survey should be on a voluntary basis.
- The respondents should be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible use of the research findings.
- The confidentiality of the information supplied by the respondents and the anonymity of the respondents must be respected.

The target population was accessed through voluntary sign-up to participate in the survey. An overview of the research study was included in the invitation. The respondents were also informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that the researcher will keep the information in strict confidence and will only use the collected data or information for degree-examination purposes. The research topic involved sensitive and controversial issues, such as comments by academic staff on the implementation of the current performance management system. The anonymity of the research participants and the research data was therefore protected. The respondents were also assured that no information on an individual's performance appraisal or performance will be reflected or made public knowledge. Finally, data are displayed as group data, not per individual.

## **4.7 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

The chapter begins with a detailed description of the study design and the methodology used in conducting the empirical study. The procedure used in designing the measuring instrument was discussed, together with the measures that were taken to ensure the reliability and validity of the instrument. The chapter further

discussed the study population and gave an overview of the respondents. The chapter ended with an explanation of the statistical procedures used in the data analysis and the ethical considerations adopted in the study.

The following chapter presents and interprets the results of this study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 4 discussed the design and methodology of the present study. The research population and the development and administration of the measuring instrument were also discussed in the chapter. This chapter presents the data analysis, research findings and discussion of the research findings.

#### **5.2 PREPARATION OF THE DATA**

Data analysis begins with the editing and coding of the data. Editing includes checking data-collection forms for omission, legibility and consistency in classification; discarding completed responses that have missing data; and identifying potential error in data collection and discussing its implications (Zikmund, 2003). The data are thereafter entered into a user-friendly and retrievable database or spreadsheet. The data in this study were collected through a web-based questionnaire. Therefore, the coding task took place during the design of the questionnaire. The data were analysed using both inferential and descriptive statistics through the SPSS statistical package. The questionnaires were processed by the Bureau for Market Research at Unisa. The SPSS statistical package was used to compile descriptive statistics.

#### **5.3 EXPLANATION OF STATISTICAL TEST**

The data collected were analysed using a one-sample t-test, which is used to test whether a population mean is significantly different from some hypothesised value. It is more useful when one measurement variable is involved and the researcher wants to compare the mean value of the measurement variable with some theoretical expectation. The present study measured the perceptions of all academic staff (irrespective of their position) in the case university. This represents a one-measurement variable.

- **N** - This is the number of valid (i.e. non-missing) observations used in calculating the t-test. It is the sample size ( **$n = 313$** ).
- $\bar{x}$  = **Mean** – It is the mean (average) of the sample size.
- **S ( $\sigma$ )** = Standard deviation is a statistical value used to determine how spread out the data in a sample are, and how close individual data points are to the mean, or average, value of the sample. A standard deviation of a data set equal to zero indicates that all values in the set are the same. A larger value implies that the individual data points are further from the mean value. A standard deviation of  $0 < 1$  will be considered to represent a true reflection of the average perception of the sample in this study.
- **S / sq root(n)** = Standard error of the mean demonstrates how accurate an estimate of the mean is likely to be.

#### 5.4 THE RESPONSE RATE

Babbie and Mouton (2001) describe the response rate as the extent of the representation of the sample respondents. Moreover, if a high response rate is achieved, there is lesser chance of significant response bias than if a low response rate is achieved. According to Rubin and Babbie (2011), a response rate of at least 50% is usually considered adequate for analysis and reporting. In addition, a response rate of at least 60% is considered good, while a response rate of 70% is considered very good. However, Monroe and Adams (2012) observed that although web surveys are popular, one major concern is their typical low response rate. This is supported by Petchenic and Watermolen (2011), who state that on average online survey rates are 11% below mail and phone surveys, and response rates as low as 2% were reported. Saunders *et al.* (2012) further criticise web-based surveys in that their quality is reduced by partial responses and abandonments. This was also evidenced in this study.

Out of the targeted sample of 1 775, only 492 questionnaires were returned by the respondents, out of which only 313 questionnaires (which constitute 18% of the target population) were fully and correctly completed; therefore usable for statistical analysis. This means that 179 questionnaires were not usable for analysis, as they had too many missing or incorrect entries.

## 5.5 RESPONDENTS' AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN THE INSTITUTION

The aim of Section A of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) was to examine the respondents' awareness and understanding of the role of performance management in the institution. Therefore, the questions in this section were specifically designed according to this objective. The results of this section are depicted in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Results of one-sample t-test statistics for Section A of the measuring instrument**

<b>One-sample statistics</b>				
<b>SECTION A: AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN YOUR ORGANISATION</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>	<b>Std. error mean</b>
<b>Q.1</b> I am aware of the existence of a performance management system in my institution.	313	4.68	0.641	0.036
<b>Q.2</b> The performance management system is clearly defined and its purpose has been communicated to employees.	313	3.40	1.226	0.069
<b>Q.3</b> I was consulted during the design and development of the	313	1.88	1.166	0.066

current performance management system.				
<b>Q.4</b> It is clear to me why a performance management system is in place at my institution.	313	3.34	1.266	0.072
<b>Q.5</b> Performance management helps me to express the value of my contribution towards the institution's goals.	313	3.01	1.312	0.074
<b>Q.6</b> Performance management at my institution integrates the goals of individuals with those of the institution.	313	2.88	1.302	0.074
<b>Q.7</b> The performance management at my institution serves its purpose well.	313	2.40	1.252	0.071

### **5.5.1 I am aware of the existence of a performance management system in my institution**

The rationale behind Question 1 was to determine whether the respondents are aware of the performance management system in their institution.

Question 1 in Table 5.1 showed  $\bar{x} = 4.68$  and  $\sigma = 0.641$ , indicating that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they are aware of the existence of performance management in their institution.

### **5.5.2 The performance management system is clearly defined and its purpose has been communicated to employees**

In Question 2 the respondents were asked whether the performance management system in their organisation is defined and its purpose clearly communicated to them. The results of this question showed  $\bar{x} = 3.3$  and  $\sigma = 1.226$  respectively. This suggests a neutral position by the respondents with a fair perception that the performance management system is clearly defined and its purpose communicated



to the respondents. These results are supported by Aguinis (2013), who emphasises that when developing and implementing a performance management system, it is important to establish the reasons for such a system for all participants so that they clearly understand the system.

### **5.5.3 I was consulted during the design and development of the current performance management system**

The rationale behind Question 3 was to ascertain whether the respondents were consulted during the design and development of the current performance management system. The results of this showed  $\bar{x} = 1.88$  and  $\sigma = 1.166$ , thus suggesting that most of the respondents were not consulted during the design and development of the current performance management system in their institution. According to Aguinis (2013), such a performance management system is likely to fail. The author emphasises that for performance management systems to be successful and serve their purpose well, all participants should be consulted and be given an opportunity to take part in their development and implementation. Further, Oliver (2008) states that consulting all participants during the development and implementation of a performance management system increases the chances of buy-in of the system from all stakeholders, thereby resulting in the system successfully achieving its aims and objectives.

### **5.5.4 It is clear to me why a performance management system is in place at my institution**

The rationale behind Question 4 was to establish whether the existence and purpose of the performance management system is clearly communicated to the respondents. The results showed  $\bar{x} = 3.34$  and  $\sigma = 1.266$ , indicating a neutral position by the respondents, who are not very clear about the purpose of the performance management system in the institution. As academic staff members were not consulted before the performance management system was introduced (Question 3), they are not totally sure whether it was defined and its purpose communicated. According to Ogbonna (2007), for performance management to be effective, it requires change in people, called transition, which means a shift in employee mind-set from the way things are done at a specific point in time to a new

way of doing things. This can be achieved by clarifying its purpose and communicating that to all stakeholders.

#### **5.5.5 Performance management helps me to express the value of my contribution towards the institution's goals**

Question 5 was designed to establish the extent to which the performance management system assists the respondents in expressing the value of their individual contribution towards institutional goals. The responses received by the respondents showed  $\bar{x} = 3.01$  and  $\sigma = 1.312$ . Again, the results suggest a slightly poor deviation of respondents from the mean to indicate a neutral position regarding this question. These results are consistent with the work of Kim (2011) and Aguinis (2013), who emphasise that performance management systems create a direct link between employee performance and organisational goals and make the employees' contribution to the organisation explicit. Similarly, Stanton and Nankervis (2011) emphasise the importance of the management of individual employees' performance and their combined contributions to the overall effectiveness of the organisation.

#### **5.5.6 Performance management at my institution integrates the goals of individuals with those of the institution**

The respondents were asked to ascertain whether they feel that the performance management system in their institution integrates their individual goal with that of the institution (Question 6). The majority of the respondents disagreed with this statement, as reflected in the following results:  $\bar{x} = 2.88$  and  $\sigma = 1.302$ . According to Decramer *et al.* (2007), institutional goals may sometimes conflict with personal goals and as such, there is conflict of interests during the implementation stage, thus supporting the findings of this study. Decramer *et al.* (2007) and Gruman and Saks (2011) further posit that employee performance management is generally a smaller part of a broader 'plan' that encompasses strategic goals and objectives for the division/department or organisation and may result in frequent lack of synergy between organisational goals, departmental plans and the performance objectives of individuals.

### **5.5.7 The performance management at my institution serves its purpose well**

The respondents were asked whether performance management at their institution serves its purpose well. The results of this question showed  $\bar{x} = 2.4$  and  $\sigma = 1.252$ , as illustrated in Table 5.1. There is clear indication from the results that the majority of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this question, with responses falling below the mean and a greater deviation of respondents from the average position. The results of this question is consistent with the findings of Holland (2006), which revealed that only three out of ten employees believe that their company's performance-review system actually helped them improve their performance towards the achievement of organisational goals. Coleman (2009) further argues that it is unrealistic to expect that when a performance management system is implemented, employees will automatically and immediately be motivated to perform better.

## **5.6 THE ROLE OF MANAGERS IN ENSURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The aim of Section B of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) was to establish the respondents' perceptions of the role of their managers in ensuring that the performance management system serves its purpose effectively. Therefore the questions in this section were specifically designed according to this aim. The results for this section are presented in Table 5.2 below.

**Table 5.2: Results of one-sample t-test statistics for Section B of the measuring instrument**

<b>One-sample statistics</b>				
<b>SECTION B: THE ROLE OF MANAGERS IN ENSURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>	<b>Std. error mean</b>
<b>Q.8</b> My manager is in a good position to review my performance.	313	3.42	1.248	0.071
<b>Q.9</b> My manager is knowledgeable in implementing the performance management system.	313	3.45	1.168	0.066
<b>Q.10</b> My manager applies the performance management system in accordance with the institutional policy.	313	3.49	1.115	0.063
<b>Q.11</b> It is possible to provide evidence of my performance to my manager in order to justify my ratings.	313	3.74	1.115	0.063
<b>Q. 12</b> My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset me.	313	3.40	1.139	0.064
<b>Q.13</b> My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset the manager.	313	3.23	1.149	0.065
<b>Q.14</b> My rating is the result of my manager trying to avoid bad feelings among employees.	313	2.20	1.089	0.062
<b>Q.15</b> My manager provides me with clear explanations that justify the ratings I get for my work.	313	3.29	1.164	0.066
<b>Q.16</b> My manager judges the work I perform, not me as an individual.	313	3.47	1.138	0.064
<b>Q.17</b> My manager rates employee performance consistently across all employees.	313	3.03	1.167	0.066
<b>Q.18</b> I have an opportunity to ask my manager to clarify my ratings.	313	3.77	1.028	0.058

### **5.6.1 My manager is in a good position to review my performance**

The rationale behind Question 8 was to ascertain whether the respondents find their managers to be in a good position to review their performance. Table 5.2 shows  $\bar{x} = 3.42$  and  $\sigma = 1.248$ , indicating that a large percentage of the academic staff members are not sure about the appropriateness of their managers reviewing their work performance. This result is not totally supported by Aguinis (2013), who argues that the advantage of using managers as a source of performance information is that they are usually in the best position to evaluate performance in relation to strategic organisational goals.

### **5.6.2 My manager is knowledgeable in implementing the performance management system**

The respondents were asked whether they find their managers to be knowledgeable in implementing performance management (Question 9). On this question, the results showed that the majority of the respondents agreed that their managers are knowledgeable in the implementation of the performance management system, with  $\bar{x} = 3.45$  and  $\sigma = 1.168$  respectively. This result is inconsistent with that of Flaniken (2009), which revealed that in most organisations managers do not receive sufficient performance training, and therefore they do not have adequate knowledge to rate employee performance. According to Haines and St-Onge (2012), organisations that provide more performance management training have performance management systems that deliver more valued outcomes.

### **5.6.3 My manager applies the performance management system in accordance with the institutional policy**

The respondents were asked whether they believe that their managers apply the performance management system in accordance with the institutional policy. Although a high percentage of the respondents agreed with this statement ( $\bar{x} = 3.49$ ), their responses could not be described as representing their true perception, with  $\sigma = 1.115$ . This result could be due to some outliers among the respondents who hold extreme positions about the statement. Information regarding the performance management system is conspicuous and easily accessible via the institution's intranet, yet a reasonable number of respondents indicated that they

were unsure whether it was done in accordance with the institutional policy, thus accounting for the divergent degree of standard deviation recorded ( $\sigma = 1.115$ ). The finding in this study is supported by a previous research finding by Aguinis (2013), who stated that the performance management policy must be developed and implemented in such a way that it provides clear guidance to managers and employees on how to deal with performance and capability issues.

#### **5.6.4 It is possible to provide evidence of my performance to my manager in order to justify my ratings**

This question was asked in order to establish whether it is possible for the respondents to provide their managers with evidence of their performance in order to justify their performance ratings. The statistical evidence ( $\bar{x} = 3.74$ ) showed that the respondents are willing to provide evidence of their performance for the purpose of performance rating by their managers. Again, this could not be said to truly represent the perception of the respondents given the divergence of the standard deviation ( $\sigma = 1.115$ ) from the mean. This perception could be responsible for the contrast in this study to that of Flaniken (2009), who contended that most work outcomes in organisations are the result of group effort rather than individual effort, thus making individual performance appraisal not a meaningful way of assessing employees' performance in such organisations. In the surveyed institution, however, the majority of the respondents agreed that it is possible for them to provide evidence to their managers to justify their performance ratings.

#### **5.6.5 My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset me**

The respondents were asked whether they believe that their managers give them the rating they have earned even if it might upset them. The respondents did not agree on this question in general, given the mean statistic of ( $\bar{x} = 3.4$ ) and the standard deviation of  $\sigma 1.139$ . However, it could be concluded that there was evidence that managers do provide academic staff members with ratings commensurate with their work performance. This result also found support in the work of Flaniken (2009) and Aguinis (2013), who argue that raters should focus on the work standards and goals set in the beginning of the performance management cycle when appraising employees and provide feedback on whether they were met or not.

#### **5.6.6 My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset the manager**

The respondents were asked whether their managers give them the performance ratings they deserve even if they might upset the manager. The responses obtained to this question are closely related to the ones obtained to the previous question. Most of the respondents were not totally sure whether their managers get upset with the ratings that have been awarded to them (academic staff). The statistical evidence showed a mean of  $\bar{x} = 3.74$  and a standard deviation of  $\sigma = 1.149$ . This result concurred with findings by Aguinis (2013), who stresses that managers must avoid destructive criticism when reviewing employee performance no matter how upset they are with the employee's performance, as it may produce negative feelings and increase chances for conflict.

#### **5.6.7 My rating is the result of my manager trying to avoid bad feelings among employees**

The respondents were asked whether they think their rating is the result of their manager trying to avoid bad feelings among them. Previous research findings (e.g. Flaniken, 2009) stress that managers should rate employees in accordance with predetermined goals and standards, irrespective of how employees feel. Similarly, Aguinis (2013) warns that managers should always be constructive when providing employees with their performance feedback in order to avoid negative feelings and conflict. The finding of the present study showed  $\bar{x} = 3.4$  and  $\sigma = 1.139$ , suggesting that the majority of the respondents disagreed that they are awarded ratings by their managers in order to avoid bad feelings. The respondents were confident that their ratings are objective and that the outcomes are without any bias by their managers.

#### **5.6.8 My manager provides me with clear explanations that justify the ratings I get for my work**

This question was asked to determine whether the respondents get a clear explanation from their managers to justify the performance ratings they get. The majority of the respondents were not sure whether they receive explanations from their managers to justify the ratings they get for their work performance. The results obtained showed a little above average ( $\bar{x} = 3.29$ ) with  $\sigma = 1.164$ . These results are

in contrast with the findings of Karuhanga (2010), who noted that a major challenge in performance management systems was the lack of adequate feedback to employees about their performance, and in some instances it was revealed that there was no performance evaluation at all.

#### **5.6.9 My manager judges the work I perform, not me as an individual**

The respondents were asked whether they feel that their managers judge the work they perform, not them as individuals. The results obtained from the respondents indicated that the majority agreed that their ratings are assessed based on their work performance, rather than personality. These results,  $\bar{x} = 3.47$  with  $\sigma = 1.138$ , provided further confirmation of the results obtained in questions 12 and 13 respectively on the issues of objectivity and personality in the conducting of performance ratings by managers.

#### **5.6.10 My manager rates employee performance consistently across all employees**

The rationale behind Question 17 was to examine the respondents' opinion on whether their managers rate employee performance consistently across all employees. The results showed in Table 5.2 indicated  $\bar{x} = 3.03$  with  $\sigma = 1.167$ , suggesting a neutral position by the respondents. This result could be informed by the confidential nature of the performance management system, which is conducted on a one-to-one basis between individual employees and their managers. Therefore, it is not easy for individual employees to compare performance ratings among themselves. This reasoning could be sustained by the assertion by Aguinis (2013), who emphasises the need for managers to always assure employees about the confidentiality of personal information collected from individual employees.

#### **5.6.11 I have an opportunity to ask my manager to clarify my ratings**

The respondents were asked whether they have an opportunity to ask their managers to clarify their ratings. A sizeable majority of the respondents indicated that they are provided with an opportunity to demand clarifications about their performance ratings from their managers. This results,  $\bar{x} = 3.77$  and  $\sigma = 1.028$ , somewhat reinforced the responses obtained in Question 15, to the effect that



employees received some kind of justification regarding their ratings; and got clarity on what they must do in order to improve these ratings (if necessary) in the future. This finding was in concert with previous research findings by Aguinis *et al.* (2011), who state that a performance management system serves as an important two-way communication device, as it clarifies the types of behaviours and results that are valued and rewarded by the organisation.

## 5.7 RESPONDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE GOALS AND STANDARD SETTING

Section C of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) aimed to examine the satisfaction with performance goals and standard setting. The results on this section are presented in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3: Results of one-sample t-test statistics for Section C of the measuring instrument**

<b>One-sample statistics</b>					
<b>SECTION C: SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE GOALS AND STANDARD SETTING</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>	<b>Std. error mean</b>	
<b>Q.19</b> I am satisfied with my involvement in the setting of my performance goals and standards.	313	3.23	1.23	0.07	
<b>Q. 20</b> My performance goals and standards are clear to me.	313	3.46	1.168	0.066	
<b>Q. 21</b> My performance goals and standards are set on the right level for my position: not too high, not too low.	313	3.28	1.178	0.067	
<b>Q. 22</b> I feel some of the tasks I actually do in my work are ignored when setting performance goals.	313	3.45	1.270	0.72	
<b>Q. 23</b> My work performance is rated against the standards and goals previously agreed upon.	313	3.34	1.124	0.064	
<b>Q.24</b> My performance goals and standards reflect	313	3.23	1.258	0.071	

the most important factors in my job.				
<b>Q.25</b> My performance goals and standards are imposed on me by my manager and senior management in the institution.	313	3.23	1.312	0.074
<b>Q. 26</b> My performance goals allow for changes to be made if what I actually do in my job changes.	313	3.13	1.158	0.065

### **5.7.1 I am satisfied with my involvement in the setting of my performance goals and standards**

The respondents were asked to state whether they are satisfied with their involvement in the setting of performance goals and standards. The results of this question showed  $\bar{x} = 3.23$  and  $\sigma = 1.23$ , suggesting that a little above average of the respondents were satisfied (although not particularly sure) with the level of their involvement with the setting of the performance management system in the institution. There is also a corresponding level of standard deviation depicting a fair reflection of the perception of academic staff members. By implication, the respondents indicated that the system is not a 'command and control' system, in other words, goals are not imposed on people. The results of this question are in line with the goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2002), which emphasises that people who participate in setting goals are likely to be more motivated to achieve them than those who are given goals created for them. Gruman and Saks (2011) also call for participatory performance management systems in which employees are fully engaged.

### **5.7.2 My performance goals and standards are clear to me**

The respondents were asked to state whether their performance goals and standards are made clear to them. With  $\bar{x} = 3.46$  and  $\sigma = 1.167$ , it is clear that the majority of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the performance goals and standards are clear to them and they know precisely what their responsibilities are. These results are consistent with the argument proffered by Aguinis (2013) that managers should discuss with individual employees the key accountabilities or broad areas of a job for which they are responsible for producing results.

### **5.7.3 My performance goals and standards are set on the right level for my position: not too high, not too low**

The respondents were asked whether they feel that their performance goals and standards are set on the right level for their position, that is, not too high, not too low. Again, with  $\bar{x} = 3.28$  and  $\sigma = 1.178$  it can be concluded that most academic staff members are confident that their performance goals and standards have been set at an acceptable level that corresponds with the position they occupy in the organisation. It can therefore be reasonably inferred from these results that set goals and standards are achievable by the respondents. These results can therefore be located within the goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2006), which posits that hard but achievable goals are motivating because they require one to attain more in order to be satisfied than do low or easily attainable goals.

### **5.7.4 I feel some of the tasks I actually do in my work are ignored when setting performance goals**

This question aimed to establish whether the respondents feel that some of the tasks they actually do in their work are ignored when setting performance goals. The results obtained from this question ( $\bar{x} = 3.45$  and  $\sigma = 1.270$ ) demonstrated that the majority of the respondents are of the view that not all tasks performed by them are taken into consideration when setting performance goals, thus adversely affecting their ratings. These results found support in a similar study by Pienaar and Bester (2007), which involved academics in the early years of their careers. The authors reported that academics considered performance management systems to lack validity, that is, they do not measure all they are supposed to measure (Pienaar & Bester, 2007). Similarly, Aguinis *et al.* (2011) assert that good and credible performance management systems should evaluate all major job responsibilities, including behaviours and results.

### **5.7.5 My work performance is rated against the standards and goals previously agreed upon**

The respondents were asked to state whether they feel that their work performance is rated against the standards and goals previously agreed upon. The responses regarding this question were reasonably above average, with  $\bar{x} = 3.34$  and  $\sigma =$

1.124, suggesting that management do not deviate from predetermined goals and standards in rating employees' performance. Again, the results demonstrated some degree of consistency with Aguinis (2013), who emphasises that a good performance management system should review the extent to which the desired behaviours are being displayed, and whether the desired results have been achieved as agreed in the performance agreement.

#### **5.7.6 My performance goals and standards reflect the most important factors in my job**

The respondents were asked whether they feel that their performance goals and standards reflect the most important factors in their job. The results obtained ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$  and  $\sigma = 1.258$ ) showed that more than half of the respondents feel that their performance goals and standards reflect the most important factors in their jobs. Interestingly, while the majority of the respondents indicated in Question 22 that some of the tasks they actually perform in the course of their duties are ignored when setting performance goals and standard, in this question the majority of the respondents indicated that the tasks covered in their performance goals and standards are the most important ones.

#### **5.7.7 My performance goals and standards are imposed on me by my manager and senior management in the institution**

The question was asked to examine whether the respondents feel that their performance goals and standards are imposed on them by their managers and senior management in the institution.

It is clear from the results ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$  and  $\sigma = 1.312$ ) that more than half of the respondents concurred that work standards and performance goals are not imposed on them by management. In other words, academic staff members participate in the setting of performance standards and goals, thus confirming the responses obtained in Question 19. Although the goal- and standard-setting process could adopt a top-down approach, where managers take the lead during discussions, employees are nevertheless provided with an opportunity to give input in the final outcome. This research outcome is supported by Gruman and Saks (2011), who found that participatory performance management systems achieve their objectives.

**5.7.8 My performance goals allow for changes to be made if what I actually do in my job changes**

The respondents were asked to state whether their performance goals allow for changes if what they actually do in their job changes. The statistical results obtained ( $\bar{x} = 3.13$  and  $\sigma = 1.158$ ) showed that the majority of the respondents agreed that their performance goals allowed for changes to be made if what they actually do in their job changes. Given these results, it can be implied that there was no explicit clarification during the goal- and standard-setting session as to whether the respondents can change their performance goals and standards should there be changes in their actual job performance.

**5.8 RESPONDENTS’ SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE RATING AND BONUS**

Section D of the questionnaire (see Appendix A) aimed to examine the respondents’ satisfaction with the performance rating and bonus. The results are presented in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4: Results of one-sample t-test statistics for Section D of the measuring instrument**

One-sample statistics				
SECTION D: SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE RATING AND BONUS	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Q. 27 I feel that the performance management system respects my independence and freedom regarding my work as an academic.	313	2.67	1.297	0.073
Q. 28 The performance management system helped me develop a positive	313	2.61	1.342	0.076

attitude towards my job.				
<b>Q. 29</b> I feel that the current performance management system takes my workload into consideration.	313	2.37	1.270	0.072
<b>Q. 30</b> All efforts I put into work are considered during the final performance review at the end of the year.	313	2.74	1.302	0.074
<b>Q. 31</b> The criteria used to calculate the performance bonus are fair.	313	2.69	1.191	0.067
<b>Q. 32</b> The performance bonus motivates me to strive for excellence.	313	2.86	1.343	0.076
<b>Q. 33</b> The performance bonus motivates poor performers to work harder in order to get a bonus in the future.	313	2.73	1.276	0.072
<b>Q. 34</b> My recent performance rating was fair.	313	3.5	1.11	0.063

### **5.8.1 I feel that the performance management system respects my independence and freedom regarding my work as an academic**

The respondents were asked to state whether the performance management system respects their independence and freedom regarding their work as academics. According to Barret and Barret (2008), academics have a high regard for work autonomy and a fairly well-developed cynicism about managerial practices, performance management being regarded as one of them. In line with Barret and Barret's submission, the results on this question ( $\bar{x} = 2.67$  and  $\sigma = 1.297$ ) showed that the majority of the respondents felt that the performance management system does not respect their work independence and academic freedom. In other words, the respondents consider the performance management system as an invasion of their cherished and established academic freedom and work independence. These findings also concurred with that of Pityana (2004), who argued that for centuries academic work was self-defining under the rubric of autonomy and academic freedom. With the introduction of performance management systems, academics in

the case institution now consider their duties to be defined by others and have to respond appropriately to visions set for a variety of purposes, including the pressures of the market economy and the speed of the information society.

### **5.8.2 The performance management system helped me develop a positive attitude towards my job**

The respondents were asked to state whether the performance management system helps them develop a positive attitude towards their job. Again, the results ( $\bar{x} = 2.61$  and  $\sigma = 1.342$ ) obtained on this question indicated that the majority of the respondents disagree with the statement; suggesting that the performance management system does not positively contribute to the development of their work attitudes. Luthra and Jain (2012) posit that even if the performance management system appears to have all the right elements that encourage employees to perform better in a team or that help a team perform better in the organisation, such as communication, coaching, development, rewards and recognition, the system will still not achieve the intended purpose if employees lack faith in its implementation.

### **5.8.3 I feel that the current performance management system takes my workload into consideration**

The respondents were asked whether they feel that their performance management system takes their workload into account. Similar to the results obtained on preceding aspects of Section D of the questionnaire, the majority of the respondents do not feel that the performance management system takes their workload into consideration. This was evident in the statistical results ( $\bar{x} = 2.37$  and  $\sigma = 1.270$ ), suggesting that the workload of academic staff members is not factored into the review of their performance ratings. These findings support those of Barrett and Barrett (2008), which also revealed that respondents' workloads in their study were not considered during performance reviews. The authors further report that academics who were surveyed worked long hours and during weekends with their extra efforts not recognised. Adams's equity theory (1963), which postulates that people compare their own perceived work outcomes (rewards) with their own perceived work inputs (contributions/workload) and expect recognition provided further theoretical reinforcement for the finding of the present study. Further, according to Molefe (2010), performance management systems are likely to be

resisted by academic staff if they do not take into account the teaching workload or distribution of the workload between members of departments.

#### **5.8.4 All efforts I put into work are considered during the final performance review at the end of the year**

The respondents were asked whether they feel all the effort they put into their work is considered during the final performance review at the end of the year. Although the respondents indicated in Question 24 that their performance goals and standards reflect the most important factors in their job, the results ( $\bar{x} = 2.74$  and  $\sigma = 1.302$ ) obtained in the present question showed that not all the efforts they put into performing their jobs are taken into consideration during their performance evaluation. These results are in line with the findings of Barrett and Barrett (2008), in which respondents indicated that they put extra effort into their work by working long hours; that is; working in the evenings and weekends with no recognition.

#### **5.8.5 The criteria used to calculate the performance bonus are fair**

The respondents were asked whether they find the criteria used to calculate the performance bonus in their institution to be fair. The majority of the respondents disagreed with this statement, as reflected in the statistical results of  $\bar{x}2.69$  and  $\sigma1.191$  respectively. A possible reason for the outcome of this question could be lack of proper understanding by academic staff of how performance bonuses are calculated. These results are in line with those of Luthra and Jain (2012), which revealed that employees generally have a negative perception of how performance management systems distribute rewards.

#### **5.8.6 The performance bonus motivates me to strive for excellence**

The respondents were asked whether they are motivated by the performance bonus to strive for excellence. The results of this question ( $\bar{x} = 2.86$  and  $\sigma = 1.343$ ) revealed that despite the fact that good performance is attached to a performance bonus in this institution, this reward does not motivate academic employees, given the statistical evidence that showed a below-average responses. This result is consistent with the findings of Luthra and Jain (2012) that employees may perceive that the performance management system is unfair in distributing rewards to better performers. This may lead to these employees having to deal with the perceived



imbalance between efforts and rewards by altering their performance (putting in less effort). Two reasons can be attributed to these results: first, employees could consider the bonus as not attractive enough, as emphasised by the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), which states that employees will only work harder if the reward promised is not attractive. Second, rewards are a great source of motivation for employees, but they can prove to decrease motivation in circumstances where those employees having poor performance records are equally rewarded, as found by Saeed and Shahbaz (2011).

#### **5.8.7 The performance bonus motivates poor performers to work harder in order to get a bonus in the future**

The respondents were asked whether the performance bonus in their institution motivates poor performers to work harder in order to get a bonus in the future. There is no statistical confirmation of this statement, with a mean of  $\bar{x} = 2.73$  and a standard deviation of  $\sigma = 1.276$ . These results confirm the findings in Question 32 of this study in which the respondents indicated that they were not motivated by the performance bonus to strive for excellence. These findings are consistent with the theoretical explanation provided by Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, which emphasises that employees first assess the degree to which improved job performance is expected to lead to desired outcomes. Because the respondents indicated in Question 31 of this study that the criteria used by their institution to calculate the performance bonus are not fair, they therefore feel that rewards are not guaranteed, no matter how hard they may work.

#### **5.8.8 My recent performance rating was fair**

This question was asked to establish whether the respondents feel their recent performance rating was fair. It was evident from the majority of the responses that the recent performance rating was considered to be fair, with a mean of  $\bar{x} = 3.5$  and a standard deviation of  $\sigma = 1.110$ . These results confirmed the findings in questions 9 and 16 of this study, where the majority of the respondents indicated that their managers are knowledgeable in implementing the performance management system and that they are rated strictly based on the job they do, not on them as individuals. However, these results are in contrast with the findings of Flaninken (2009), in which

respondents reported that their performance management system lacks credibility. The outcome of another study conducted by Gallup in India in 2010 also contrasts with the findings of the current study (Luthra and Jain, 2012). Gallup found that Indian employees, particularly those with three to ten years' tenure in an organisation, strongly feel that most performance management systems are not capable of distinguishing superior performance; therefore, they found such systems to be unfair (Luthra & Jain, 2012).

## 5.9 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF RESPONDENTS' BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

### 5.9.1 Respondents' positions

Table 5.5 displays the respondents' positions in the institution.

**Table 5.5: Respondents' position in the institution**

		<b>Respondents' positions</b>			
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Valid percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
Valid	Professor	54	17.3	17.9	17.9
	Associate professor	29	9.3	9.6	27.5
	Senior lecturer	75	24.0	24.8	52.3
	Lecturer	108	34.5	35.8	88.1
	Junior lecturer	24	7.7	7.9	96.0
	Research assistant	7	2.2	2.3	98.3
	Chair of department	3	1.0	1.0	99.3
	Manager	2	0.6	0.7	100.0
	Total	302	96.5	100.0	
	Missing	System	11	3.5	
Total		313	100.0		

From the above table it is clear that the majority of the respondents (36%) are lecturers, followed by 27% professors, 25% senior lecturers, 8% junior lecturers, 2% research assistants and 2% managers.

### 5.9.2 Respondents' length of service in their current position at the institution

Table 5.6 displays the results of the respondents' length of service at the institution.

**Table 5.6: Respondents' length of service**

**How long have you been in this position at this institution?**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	0–2 years	111	35.5	41.7	41.7
	3–5 years	82	26.2	30.8	72.6
	6–10 years	39	12.5	14.7	87.2
	11–15 years	34	10.9	12.8	100.0
	Total	266	85.0	100.0	
Missing	System	47	15.0		
Total		313	100.0		

In terms of length of service at the case university, the above table shows that the majority of the respondents (42%) are new in this institution, with the length of service between zero and two years in their current positions. In effect, this group of employees most certainly has not gone through the performance-review process many times, and could be considered to have no adequate insight into the system. However, they are entitled to their perceptions of this system. The smallest group of only 13% indicated that they have occupied their positions for 11 to 15 years.

### 5.9.3 State your experience in the academic job in general, including at other institutions

Table 5.7 shows the respondents' experience in the academic job in general, including at other institutions.

**Table 5.7: Experience in the job**

#### State your experience in the academic job in general, including at other institutions

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	0–2 years	43	13.7	17.8	17.8
	3–5 years	53	16.9	22.0	39.8
	6–10 years	50	16.0	20.7	60.6
	11–15 years	72	23.0	29.9	90.5
	16 +	23	7.3	9.5	100.0
	Total	241	77.0	100.0	
Missing	System	72	23.0		
Total		313	100.0		

It is clear from the above table that the majority of the respondents (30%) have been in their positions for 11 to 15 years, including years worked at other institutions. In total, 9.5% of the respondents indicated that they have been working as academics for 16 years and more.

### 5.9.4 Respondents' highest qualification

The study further enquired into the educational qualifications of the respondents. Table 5.8 shows the respondents' highest qualification.

**Table 5.8: Respondents' educational qualifications**

**What is your highest qualification?**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Valid percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
Valid	PhD	134	42.8	44.5	44.5
	Professional qualification (e.g. CA)	5	1.6	1.7	46.2
	Master's Honours Degree	112	35.8	37.2	83.4
	Total System	45	14.4	15.0	98.3
		5	1.6	1.7	100.0
		301	96.2	100.0	
		12	3.8		
<b>Total</b>		<b>313</b>	<b>100.0</b>		

Table 5.8 clearly indicates that 44% of the respondents possess a PhD, followed by those who possess a master's (37%). In total, 15%, 2% and another 2% possess an honours degree, degree and professional qualification respectively.

**5.9.5 Colleges at which the respondents are working**

The respondents were asked to indicate the college where they are located. Table 5.9 below displays the results.

**Table 5.9: Respondents' unit of work at the institution**

**At which college are you working?**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	College of Art and Environmental Sciences	26	8.3	8.6	8.6
	College of Economic and Management Sciences	89	28.4	29.6	38.2
	College of Education	31	9.9	10.3	48.5
	College of Graduate Studies	4	1.3	1.3	49.8
	College of Human Sciences	90	28.8	29.9	79.7
	College of Law	26	8.3	8.6	88.4
	College of Science, Engineering & Technology	31	9.9	10.3	98.7
	School of Business Leadership	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	301	96.2	100.0	
Missing	System	12	3.8		
Total		313	100.0		

The majority of the respondents of this study work in the colleges of Economic and Management Sciences and Human Sciences, with 30% of the respondents from each college. The smallest number of respondents (1%) came from the School of Business Leadership.

### 5.9.6 Respondents' age

The descriptive statistics were generated to determine frequencies and percentages for the age variable. This is given in a summary statistic for the mean factor scores. The average age of the respondents is indicated in Table 5.10.

**Table 5.10: Respondents' age**

		What is your age?			
		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	20–25 years	17	5.4	5.6	5.6
	26–30 years	28	8.9	9.3	14.9
	31–35 years	38	12.1	12.6	27.5
	36–40	31	9.9	10.3	37.7
	Over 40	188	60.1	62.3	100.0
	Total	302	96.5	100.0	
Missing	System	11	3.5		
Total		313	100.0		

It is clear from the above table that the majority of the respondents are over 40 years of age. The smallest group is between the age of 20 and 25, with only 5%. This distribution suggests that the majority of the employees are relatively older.

### 5.9.7 Respondents' gender

Table 5.11 below presents the gender composition of the respondents.

**Table 5.11: Respondents' gender**

**State your gender**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Valid percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
Valid	Female	164	52.4	54.3	54.3
	Male	138	44.1	45.7	100.0
	Total	302	96.5	100.0	
Missing	System	11	3.5		
Total		313	100.0		

Of the academics who responded, the majority (164, 54%) are female and 138 (46%) are male. The response rate implies that the academic industry is dominated by women.

**5.9.8 Respondents' marital status**

Table 5.12 shows the marital status of the respondents.

**Table 5.12: Respondents' marital status**

**What is your marital status?**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Valid percentage</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
Valid	Single	70	22.4	24.0	24.0
	Married	200	63.9	68.5	92.5
	Divorced	19	6.1	6.5	99.0
	Widowed	3	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	292	93.3	100.0	
Missing	System	21	6.7		
Total		313	100.0		



From Table 5.12 above it is clear that the majority of the respondents (68%) indicated that they are married, 24% are single, 6.5% of the respondents indicated that they are divorced, while the smallest group those who are widowed (1%).

### 5.9.9 Respondents' race

Table 5.13 below shows the race of the respondents.

**Table 5.13: Respondents' race**

Choose your race below:

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Black	110	35.1	36.7	36.7
	Coloured	6	1.9	2.0	38.7
	Indian	11	3.5	3.7	42.3
	White	173	55.3	57.7	100.0
	Total	300	95.8	100.0	
Missing	System	13	4.2		
Total		313	100.0		

The results in the above table show that the majority of the respondents are white (58%), followed by black (37%). The smallest groups are Indian and coloured, with 3% and 2% respectively.

### 5.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are (Bashir, Afzal & Azeem, 2008). Joppe (2000) states that researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others. Moreover, Bashir *et al.* (2008) state that researchers rely upon experience and literature to address the issue of validity.

For the purpose of this study, a pilot study was conducted to test the research instrument for validity. The questionnaire was sent to selected individuals for scrutiny. These individuals were asked to look at each question to determine whether it measured what it was intended to measure. These individuals also scrutinised the questionnaire for accuracy of questions. The data collected during the pilot study were then analysed to check whether questions in the measuring instrument measure what they should measure.

Testing reliability of the measuring instrument was also very important in this study. According to Salkind (2012), the data reliability is determined by the consistency with which a measuring instrument yields a certain result when the entity being measured has not changed.

The most common method of assessing internal consistency reliability estimates is by using the coefficient alpha. Although there are three different measures of coefficient alpha, the most widely used measure is Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is actually an average of all the possible split-half reliability estimates of an instrument (Crocker & Algina, 1986; DeVellis, 2006; Gregory, 1992; Henson, 2001). It is a reliability coefficient that measures inter-item reliability or the degree of internal consistency or homogeneity between variables measuring one construct or concept (i.e. the degree to which different items measuring the same variable attain consistent results). This coefficient varies from 0 to 1 and a value of 0.6 or less generally indicates unsatisfactory internal consistency reliability (Malhotra, 2004). To ensure reliability in this study, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient analysis was done. According to O'Leary-Kelly and Vokurka (1998), coefficients equal to or greater than 0.70 indicate high reliability of the measuring instrument.

Tables 5.14 to 5.17 show the Cronbach's alpha coefficients. All constructs' data were regarded as excellent and reliable, with a coefficient above 0.70, ranging from 0.693 to 0.911.

**5.10.1 Reliability test for the construct “to establish whether academic staff are aware of and understand the performance management system”**

Table 5.14 shows the item reliability and Cronbach’s alpha coefficients in terms of establishing whether the academic staff at the case university are aware of performance management at their institution and whether they understand it.

**Table 5.14: Awareness and understanding of the performance management system**

Reliability		
Scale: ALL VARIABLES		
Reliability statistics		
Cronbach’s alpha	No. of items	
0.822	7	
<b>SECTION A OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE</b>		

This section of the questionnaire comprised a total of seven items. The reliability test for this construct is acceptable, with an overall Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.822.

**5.10.2 Reliability test for the construct: “manager’s role in ensuring the effectiveness of the performance management system”**

Table 5.15 shows the item reliability and Cronbach’s alpha coefficients when testing the construct that sought to establish role of managers in ensuring the effectiveness of the performance management system.

**Table 5.15: Manager’s role in ensuring the effectiveness of the performance management system**

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach’s alpha	No. of items
0.911	11
<b>SECTION B OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE</b>	

This section of the questionnaire comprised a total of 11 items. The reliability for the construct to establish the manager’s role in ensuring the effectiveness of the performance management system is acceptable, with an overall Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.911.

**5.10.3 Reliability test for the construct “satisfaction with performance goals and standard setting”**

Table 5.16 show the item reliability and Cronbach’s alpha coefficients in terms of establishing satisfaction with performance goals and standard setting. Item analyses were conducted separately to establish satisfaction with performance goals and standard setting.

**Table 5.16: Satisfaction with performance goals and standard setting**

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach’s alpha	No. of items
0.693	8
<b>SECTION C OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE</b>	

This section of the questionnaire comprised of a total of eight items. The reliability test for this construct is acceptable, with an overall Cronbach's alpha value of 0.693, suggesting that the questionnaire items were reliable. Questions 27 and 30 showed a low Cronbach's alpha value of below 0.6, therefore they were removed from the construct (Cronbach's alpha less than overall alpha).

#### **5.10.4 Reliability test for the construct “satisfaction with performance rating and bonus”**

Table 5.17 depicted the item reliability and Cronbach's alpha coefficients in terms of establishing whether the respondents are satisfied with their performance rating and bonus. Item analyses were conducted separately to establish whether the respondents are satisfied with performance rating and bonus.

**Table 5.17: Satisfaction with performance rating and bonus**

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
0.895	8
<b>SECTION D OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE</b>	

Table 5.17 indicated that all the questions were measuring the same dimension, as they indicated a Cronbach's alpha value of above 0.895. This section of the questionnaire comprised a total of eight items.

In general, the results of the reliability tests on all the dimensions produced high alpha values, thus suggesting that the measuring instrument was reliable. The descriptive statistics analysis findings show that the shape and spread of the data were normal and therefore acceptable. This finding is consistent across the data set. It can be concluded that all four constructs in the measuring instrument consistently measured what they were intended to measure.

## **5.11 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

This chapter presented the results of the statistical analysis. As the questionnaire comprised four dimensions (see Appendix A), the results were presented accordingly. The results of existing studies were also discussed in relation to the results obtained in this study. The results of the inferential statistics were presented using the one-sample t-test, while the results of the biographic data were presented using frequency tables. Finally, the results of the Cronbach's alpha tests performed to determine the reliability of the questionnaire items were also provided in this chapter.

The next chapter revisits the objectives, discusses the findings, makes final conclusions, provides recommendations for policy makers and makes suggestions on areas for further research.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATION

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the results of the data of the study. This chapter presents the conclusion, recommendations, limitation and identification of areas for further research in the future. This chapter consists of six sections, namely the study overview and chapters outline, conclusions drawn from the findings, the recommendations, delimitations and limitations of the study and areas for future research.

#### 6.2 THE STUDY OVERVIEW AND OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

As indicated in Chapter one, the overall aim of this study was to establish the experiences and perceptions of academic staff, specifically at the case ODL University, regarding the implementation of a performance management system. Organisations in all sectors are introducing systems to monitor and measure the performance of their staff. This resulted in universities introducing performance management systems in order to monitor and measure the performance of their staff, including the academics. Today, the subsidies HEIs receive from government push academic staff to consider their institution as a business aiming at maximising its profit (Hill, 2010). The pressure is sometimes applied on universities to become more 'business-like' in their way of doing things (Barry *et al.*, 2001; Carl & Kapp, 2004, Hill, 2010). However research has shown that HEIs are facing major challenges regarding the management of performance of academics both nationally and internationally (Carl & Kapp, 2004; Mapesela & Strydom, 2004; Tam 2008). The main challenge is that performance management systems are relatively new to education, having its origins from industry and the commercial environment, and they are therefore generally viewed with a high degree of suspicion by academics particularly (Barret & Barret, 2008; Parsons & Slabbert, 2001).

The literature review was covered in chapters one, two and three of this study. The explanatory theories were obtained from the literature review, which then provided

an indication of what to expect logically in terms of the research question. The questions in the research instrument were grounded on the literature on the topic.

In Chapter one, an overview background of performance management was given. Chapter two focused on the background, origin, purpose and challenges of performance management. Chapter three provided an overview of performance management in higher education ODL institutions. In Chapter four the research design and methodology followed in this study were discussed in more detail. Chapter five presented the research findings and Chapter six draws conclusions and provides recommendations based on the findings.

### **6.3 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The study had four constructs and were categorised as sections A, B, C and D in the questionnaire. Each dimension comprised several questions (see Annexure A). All four constructs were developed with the aim of achieving the objectives of this study, as stated in Section 1.3 (Chapter one).

#### **6.3.1 Awareness and understanding**

The study aimed to determine whether the respondents are aware of the performance management system in their institution, and whether they understand it. To adequately address this objective, a number of questions were developed and tested.

The findings indicate that the majority of the respondents are, to a greater extent, aware of the performance management system in their organisation. Moreover, the findings indicate that the majority of the respondents agree that the performance management system is well defined and communicated to them. They also indicated that they can link the value of their individual contribution to institutional goals, which is one of the purposes of performance management systems. It is therefore concluded that the performance management system at the ODL institution is known and understood by the respondents.

However, although the majority of the respondents indicated that they are aware of and understand the performance management system in their organisation, they further indicated that they were not adequately consulted before the performance



management system was introduced in their institution. They further indicated that although they understand why this system was introduced in their institution, the current performance management system does not serve its purpose well. (See the results for questions 3 and 7 in Chapter 5.)

### **6.3.2 Role of managers**

This study aimed to determine how the respondents view the role of their managers in ensuring the effectiveness of the performance management system. To adequately address this objective, a number of questions were developed and tested.

The majority of the respondents indicated that they are satisfied with their managers reviewing their performance. They indicated that their managers have adequate knowledge regarding the important aspects of their jobs, and are therefore the most relevant people to review their performance. The respondents further revealed that they find their managers to be fair in the ratings they allocate and that they receive adequate feedback regarding their performance from their managers.

The majority of the respondents in this study, however, indicated that they are not sure whether their managers rate performance consistently across all employees. This could be due to the fact that performance-review meetings are confidential; therefore it is not easy to access information about other individuals' performance ratings. As a result, it is not possible for employees to compare the performance ratings they get to what other colleagues received.

### **6.3.3 Satisfaction with performance goals and standard setting**

The study aimed to determine whether the respondents are satisfied with the performance goal- and standard-setting process. To adequately address this objective, a number of questions were developed and tested (see Appendix A).

The majority of the respondents indicated that they are satisfied with their involvement in the process of setting their performance goals and standards. They also indicated that their goals and standards are communicated clearly to them and that they are set on the correct level (not too high or too low). They further indicated that they are rated based on the initial performance agreement agreed upon at the

beginning of the year and that the agreement embraces important tasks they do as academics.

However, the majority of the respondents indicated that although the most important tasks are considered for performance review, some of the tasks they do in their jobs are not recognised or rewarded. The majority of the respondents further indicated that some of the goals and standards are imposed on them by management.

#### **6.3.4 Satisfaction with performance rating and bonus**

The study aimed to determine whether the respondents are satisfied with their performance rating and bonus. To adequately address this objective, a number of questions were developed and tested (see Appendix A).

The results showed that the majority of the respondents are generally happy with their performance rating. They indicated that their recent performance reviews were conducted fairly; therefore they were satisfied with their recent performance ratings. Although the respondents are satisfied with their performance ratings, they however indicated that their performance management system does not take their workload into account. They further indicated that the system takes away their freedom and long-enjoyed independence.

The majority of the respondents further indicated unhappiness with the performance bonus, which they claimed does not motivate or enhance improved work performance because of their lack of satisfaction with the criteria used in calculating the performance bonus.

#### **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section elaborates on the recommended strategies to improve the performance management system at the ODL institution. The strategies are based on the findings of the study. Recommendations for further research are also made. This research was exploratory in nature and focussed on the perceptions and experiences of academic staff at an ODL university.

#### **6.4.1 No consultation**

The majority of the respondents in this study indicated that they were not consulted before the performance management system was introduced; therefore they find this system not serving its purpose well.

The respondents also indicated that the performance goals and standards are imposed on them by management. This means their inputs are not invited. According to Aguinis (2013), for performance management systems to be successful and serve their purpose well, all participants should be consulted and be given an opportunity to take part in their development and implementation. Therefore, it is recommended that organisations enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their performance management systems through adequate consultation with employees for inputs before they implement them.

#### **6.4.2 Lack of validity (performance management system not measuring what it is supposed to measure)**

The majority of the respondents in this study indicated that not all tasks they do are reviewed. This means the performance management system in the case university lacks validity, that is, it does not measure all that it is supposed to measure. The study of Pienaar and Bester (2007), which involved academics in the early years of their careers, also revealed that academics find performance management systems to be lacking validity, that is, they do not measure all they are supposed to measure. It is therefore recommended that all tasks involved in the job be considered for performance review, for instance the increased administrative tasks. According to Aguinis *et al.* (2011), good and credible performance management systems evaluate all major job responsibilities, including behaviours and results.

#### **6.4.3 No motivation to strive for excellence despite a performance bonus**

The majority of the respondents indicated that they are not happy with the way the performance bonus is calculated. As a result, the bonus does not motivate them to work harder. According to the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), employees will only work harder if the reward promised is attractive. Therefore, it is recommended that the criteria to calculate the performance bonus be reviewed.

Other respondents indicated that they are not motivated by money. Therefore it is recommended that other forms of reward other than a bonus be considered. There are many non-monetary rewards, such as flexible work arrangements, off days and international conferences that can be recommended in this regard.

## **6.5 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of demarcating a study is to make it more manageable and to this end, this study was limited to academic staff members of the case university.

Given that the performance management system in the case university is still in its infancy stage, this study is valuable, both from a theoretical and an application point of view.

Further, the empirical data in this study were collected between December 2013 and January 2014. This is the period when the performance-review meetings are normally held at the case university (December), while the new performance-agreement meetings take place in January the following year. Therefore, when data were collected, the respondents still had a fresh memory of the whole performance management process and provided their true feelings in this study.

## **6.6 LIMITATION OF STUDY**

One of the limitations of this research is that it should be appreciated within the presented context, namely the ODL institution, and therefore care should be taken in generalising the findings to other contexts.

Further, the response rate for this study was low. The results of this study were drawn from only 313 respondents out of the population of 1 775. This constitutes 18% of the entire population. Although the unit of analysis was drawn from a homogenous population which, according to Bryman and Bell (2011), make a low response rate acceptable, unlike in a heterogeneous population, it cannot be assumed that the results would have been the same if more academic staff had participated in the study.

## **6.7 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The overall aim of this study was to explore and describe the experiences and perceptions of academic staff at the ODL University regarding the implementation of a performance management system. The results of this study revealed that academic staff members at the case university are generally satisfied with the performance management system at the institution. As the respondents differed in terms of age, race, job position, educational qualifications and work experience, future research could consider the influence of these demographic variables in relation to the level of satisfaction with the performance management system. Future research could also consider a comparative study to establish whether academic staff members at residential universities are also satisfied with the implementation of performance management at their institutions.

This study also revealed that academic staff members at the case university are not motivated by the performance bonus paid to them. Future research could investigate why this is the case and how this can be addressed.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Ethics approval letter from Unisa Senate Research and Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee (SRIHC)**

PROF L LABUSCHAGNE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: RESEARCH DEPARTMENT  
Tel: +27 12 429 6368 / 2446 Fax: +27 12 429 6960 Email: llabus@unisa.ac.za  
Address: Theo van Wijk Building, 10th Floor, Office no. 50 (TvW 10-50)

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**5 September 2013**

Ms EM Maimela, Department of Human Resource Management, College of Economic and Management Sciences

Dear Ms Maimela

#### **PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH INVOLVING UNISA STAFF, STUDENTS OR DATA**

A study into Staff perceptions and experiences of a performance management system: a case study of an Open and Distance learning (ODL) institution

Your application regarding permission to conduct research involving Unisa staff, students or data in respect of the above study has been received and was considered by the Unisa Senate Research and Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee (SRIHC) on 15 August 2013.

It is my pleasure to inform you that permission has been granted for this study as set out in your application.

We would like to wish you well in your research undertaking.

Kind regards

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**PROF L LABUSCHAGNE EXECUTIVE**

**DIRECTOR: RESEARCH**



**APPENDIX B**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**8 May 2013**

**Dear Prospective Participant**

My name is Esther Maimela (student number 32478941). I am currently conducting research together with Prof. M.O. Samuel, a professor in the areas of human resource development, human resource management, organisational behaviour and labour relations at the University of Witwatersrand. We would like to invite you to participate in the following study, titled:

**Academic staffs' perception of performance management: A case study of an open distance learning (ODL) institution**

The purpose of this study is to establish the experiences and perceptions of academic staff, specifically at the ODL University, regarding the implementation of the performance management system.

Note that your participation in this study is voluntary and that there is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation.

Any information you provide here will be treated as confidential and anonymous without any negative consequences for you. This survey will take you approximately 20 minutes to complete.

If you do decide to take part, please click on the button below that reads: "I have read and understand the information above and consent to participate in this study on a voluntary basis".

**I have read and understand the information above and  
consent to participate in this study on a voluntary basis.**

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Esther Maimela

signature>

## **SECTION A**

### **AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN YOUR ORGANISATION**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your awareness and understanding of the role of performance management in your institution?**

**1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree**

	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
1	I am aware of the existence of a performance management system in my institution.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The performance management system is clearly defined and its purpose has been communicated to employees.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I was consulted during the design and development of the current perf	1	2	3	4	5

	ormance management system.					
4	It is clear to me why a performance management system is in place at my institution.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Performance management helps me to express the value of my contribution towards the institution's goals.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Performance management at my institution integrates the goals of individuals with those of the institution.	1	2	3	4	5
7	The performance management at my institution serves its purpose well.	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION B: THE ROLE OF MANAGERS IN ENSURING THE EFFECTIVENESS  
OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your manager's role in ensuring that the performance management system serves its purpose effectively?**

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
8	My manager is in a good position to review my performance.	1	2	3	4	5
9	My manager is knowledgeable in implementing the performance management system.	1	2	3	4	5
10	My manager applies the performance management system in accordance with the institutional policy.	1	2	3	4	5
11	It is possible to provide evidence of my performance to my manager in order to justify my ratings.	1	2	3	4	5
12	My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset me.	1	2	3	4	5
13	My manager gives me the	1	2	3	4	5

	rating that I have earned even if it might upset the manager.					
14	My rating is the result of my manager trying to avoid bad feelings among employees.	1	2	3	4	5
15	My manager provides me with clear explanations that justify the ratings I get for my work.	1	2	3	4	5
16	My manager judges the work I perform, not me as an individual.	1	2	3	4	5
17	My manager rates employee performance consistently across all employees.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I have an opportunity to ask my manager to clarify my ratings.	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION C: SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE GOALS AND STANDARD SETTING**

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your satisfaction with performance goals and standards at your institution?**

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>19</b>	I am satisfied with my involvement in the setting of my performance goals and standards.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>20</b>	My performance goals and standards are clear to me.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>21</b>	My performance goals and standards are set on the right level for my position: not too high, not too low.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>22</b>	I feel some of the tasks I actually do in my work are ignored when setting performance goals.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>23</b>	My work performance is rated against the standards and goals previously agreed	1	2	3	4	5

	upon.					
<b>24</b>	My performance goals and standards reflect the most important factors in my job.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>25</b>	My performance goals and standards are imposed on me by my manager and senior management in the institution.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>26</b>	My performance goals allow for changes to be made if what I actually do in my job changes.	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION D: SATISFACTION WITH PERFORMANCE RATING AND BONUS

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your awareness and understanding of the role of performance management in your institution?

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
27	I feel that the performance management system respects my independence and freedom regarding my work as an academic.	1	2	3	4	5
28	The performance management system helped me develop a positive attitude towards my job.	1	2	3	4	5
29	I feel that the current performance management system takes my workload into consideration.	1	2	3	4	5
30	All efforts I put into work are considered during the final performance review at the end of the year.	1	2	3	4	5



31	The criteria used to calculate the performance bonus are fair.	1	2	3	4	5
32	The performance bonus motivates me to strive for excellence.	1	2	3	4	5
33	The performance bonus motivates poor performers to work harder in order to get a bonus in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
34	My recent performance rating was fair.	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION E: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

**This information is collected for statistical purposes only.**

**35** What is your position?

6  Professor

5  Associate professor

4  Senior lecturer

3  Lecturer

2  Junior lecturer

1 Other (specify).....

**36** How long have you been in this position at this institution?

1  0–2 years

- 2  3–5 years
- 3  6–10 years
- 4  11–15 years
- 5  Other (specify).....

**37 State your experience in the academic job in general, including at other institutions.**

- 1  0–2 years
- 2  3–5 years
- 3  6–10 years
- 4  11–15 years
- 5  Other (specify).....

**38 What is your highest qualification?**

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- 5  PhD
- 2  Professional qualification (e.g. CA)
- 3  Master's
- 2  Honours
- 1  Other (specify).....

**39 At which college are you working?**

Please choose **only one**:

- College of Art and Environmental Sciences
- College of Economic and Management Sciences

- College of Education
- College of Graduate Studies
- College of Human Sciences
- College of Law
- College of Science, Engineering & Technology
- School of Business Leadership

**40** What is your employment status?

1 Permanent

2 Contract/temporary

**41** What is your age?

- 20–25 years
- 26–30 years
- 31–35 years
- 36–40
- Over 40

**42** State your gender:

- Male
- Female

**43** What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Other (specify) .....

**44** Choose your race below:

- Black

Coloured

Indian

White

***Thank you for taking part in this survey.***

## APPENDIX C

### FREQUENCY TABLES

**I am aware of the existence of a performance management system in my institution.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Strongly disagree (1)	2	0.6	0.6	0.6
	Disagree	2	0.6	0.6	1.3
	Neutral	12	3.8	3.8	5.1
	Agree	62	19.8	19.8	24.9
	Strongly agree (5)	235	75.1	75.1	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**The performance management system is clearly defined and its purpose has been communicated to employees.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Strongly disagree (1)	29	9.3	9.3	9.3
	Disagree	45	14.4	14.4	23.6
	Neutral	75	24.0	24.0	47.6
	Agree	99	31.6	31.6	79.2
	Strongly agree (5)	65	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**I was consulted during the design and development of the current performance management system.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree (1)	171	54.6	54.6	54.6
	Disagree	60	19.2	19.2	73.8
	Neutral	45	14.4	14.4	88.2
	Agree	24	7.7	7.7	95.8
	Strongly agree (5)	13	4.2	4.2	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**It is clear to me why a performance management system is in place at my institution.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Strongly disagree (1)	38	12.1	12.1	12.1
	Disagree	42	13.4	13.4	25.6
	Neutral	68	21.7	21.7	47.3
	Agree	106	33.9	33.9	81.2
	Strongly agree (5)	59	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**Performance management helps me to express the value of my contribution  
towards the institution's goals.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	61	19.5	19.5	19.5
Disagree	45	14.4	14.4	33.9
Neutral	76	24.3	24.3	58.1
Agree	92	29.4	29.4	87.5
Strongly agree (5)	39	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**Performance management at my institution integrates the goals of individuals with  
those of the institution.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	67	21.4	21.4	21.4
Disagree	51	16.3	16.3	37.7
Neutral	80	25.6	25.6	63.3
Agree	82	26.2	26.2	89.5
Strongly agree (5)	33	10.5	10.5	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**The performance management at my institution serves its purpose well.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	106	33.9	33.9	33.9
Disagree	59	18.8	18.8	52.7
Neutral	83	26.5	26.5	79.2
Agree	47	15.0	15.0	94.2
Strongly agree (5)	18	5.8	5.8	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My manager is in a good position to review my performance.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	35	11.2	11.2	11.2
Disagree	37	11.8	11.8	23.0
Neutral	66	21.1	21.1	44.1
Agree	112	35.8	35.8	79.9
Strongly agree (5)	63	20.1	20.1	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My manager is knowledgeable in implementing the performance management system.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	29	9.3	9.3	9.3
Disagree	34	10.9	10.9	20.1
Neutral	70	22.4	22.4	42.5
Agree	127	40.6	40.6	83.1
Strongly agree (5)	53	16.9	16.9	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	



**My manager applies the performance management system in accordance with the institutional policy.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	23	7.3	7.3	7.3
Disagree	29	9.3	9.3	16.6
Neutral	89	28.4	28.4	45.0
Agree	115	36.7	36.7	81.8
Strongly agree (5)	57	18.2	18.2	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**It is possible to provide evidence of my performance to my manager in order to justify my ratings.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	16	5.1	5.1	5.1
Disagree	34	10.9	10.9	16.0
Neutral	46	14.7	14.7	30.7
Agree	135	43.1	43.1	73.8
Strongly agree (5)	82	26.2	26.2	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset me.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	23	7.3	7.3	7.3
Disagree	46	14.7	14.7	22.0
Neutral	77	24.6	24.6	46.6
Agree	117	37.4	37.4	84.0
Strongly agree (5)	50	16.0	16.0	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset the manager.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	28	8.9	8.9	8.9
Disagree	55	17.6	17.6	26.5
Neutral	85	27.2	27.2	53.7
Agree	106	33.9	33.9	87.5
Strongly agree (5)	39	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My rating is the result of my manager trying to avoid bad feelings among employees.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	101	32.3	32.3	32.3
Disagree	98	31.3	31.3	63.6
Neutral	73	23.3	23.3	86.9
Agree	32	10.2	10.2	97.1
Strongly agree (5)	9	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My manager provides me with clear explanations that justify the ratings I get for my work.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	29	9.3	9.3	9.3
Disagree	45	14.4	14.4	23.6
Neutral	92	29.4	29.4	53.0
Agree	100	31.9	31.9	85.0
Strongly agree (5)	47	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My manager judges the work I perform, not me as an individual.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	27	8.6	8.6	8.6
Disagree	29	9.3	9.3	17.9
Neutral	80	25.6	25.6	43.5
Agree	124	39.6	39.6	83.1
Strongly agree (5)	53	16.9	16.9	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My manager rates employee performance consistently across all employees.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	44	14.1	14.1	14.1
Disagree	40	12.8	12.8	26.8
Neutral	128	40.9	40.9	67.7
Agree	65	20.8	20.8	88.5
Strongly agree (5)	36	11.5	11.5	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**I have an opportunity to ask my manager to clarify my ratings.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	16	5.1	5.1	5.1
Disagree	19	6.1	6.1	11.2
Neutral	56	17.9	17.9	29.1
Agree	152	48.6	48.6	77.6
Strongly agree (5)	70	22.4	22.4	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**How would you rate your manager's understanding of the most important factors that play a role in your work?**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Excellent	47	15.0	15.0	15.0
Good	145	46.3	46.3	61.3
Average	84	26.8	26.8	88.2
Poor	15	4.8	4.8	93.0
Very poor	20	6.4	6.4	99.4
Not sure	2	0.6	0.6	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**Is there anyone in your department whom you would consider to be in a good position to review your performance other than your manager?**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Yes	113	36.1	36.1	36.1
No	134	42.8	42.8	78.9
Not sure	66	21.1	21.1	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**I am satisfied with my involvement in the setting of my performance goals and standards.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	40	12.8	12.8	12.8
Disagree	44	14.1	14.1	26.8
Neutral	76	24.3	24.3	51.1
Agree	109	34.8	34.8	85.9
Strongly agree (5)	44	14.1	14.1	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My performance goals and standards are clear to me.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	29	9.3	9.3	9.3
Disagree	35	11.2	11.2	20.4
Neutral	65	20.8	20.8	41.2
Agree	132	42.2	42.2	83.4
Strongly agree (5)	52	16.6	16.6	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My performance goals and standards are set on the right level for my position: not too high, not too low.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	31	9.9	9.9	9.9
Disagree	48	15.3	15.3	25.2
Neutral	80	25.6	25.6	50.8
Agree	110	35.1	35.1	85.9
Strongly agree (5)	44	14.1	14.1	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My performance goals and standards reflect the most important factors in my job.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	44	14.1	14.1	14.1
Disagree	42	13.4	13.4	27.5
Neutral	70	22.4	22.4	49.8
Agree	112	35.8	35.8	85.6
Strongly agree (5)	45	14.4	14.4	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My performance goals and standards are imposed on me by my manager and senior management in the institution.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	42	13.4	13.4	13.4
Disagree	55	17.6	17.6	31.0
Neutral	66	21.1	21.1	52.1
Agree	90	28.8	28.8	80.8
Strongly agree (5)	60	19.2	19.2	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My work performance is rated against the standards and goals previously agreed upon.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	27	8.6	8.6	8.6
Disagree	40	12.8	12.8	21.4
Neutral	87	27.8	27.8	49.2
Agree	118	37.7	37.7	86.9
Strongly agree (5)	41	13.1	13.1	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My performance goals allow for changes to be made if what I actually do in my job changes.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	38	12.1	12.1	12.1
Disagree	47	15.0	15.0	27.2
Neutral	93	29.7	29.7	56.9
Agree	105	33.5	33.5	90.4
Strongly agree (5)	30	9.6	9.6	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**I feel some of the tasks I actually do in my work are ignored when setting the performance goals.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	30	9.6	9.6	9.6
Disagree	47	15.0	15.0	24.6
Neutral	64	20.4	20.4	45.0
Agree	96	30.7	30.7	75.7
Strongly agree (5)	76	24.3	24.3	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**I feel that the performance management system respects my independence and freedom regarding my work as an academic.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	79	25.2	25.2	25.2
Disagree	68	21.7	21.7	47.0
Neutral	67	21.4	21.4	68.4
Agree	74	23.6	23.6	92.0
Strongly agree (5)	25	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	



**The performance management system helped me develop a positive attitude towards my job.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	94	30.0	30.0	30.0
Disagree	58	18.5	18.5	48.6
Neutral	61	19.5	19.5	68.1
Agree	75	24.0	24.0	92.0
Strongly agree (5)	25	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**I feel that the current performance management system takes my workload into consideration.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	108	34.5	34.5	34.5
Disagree	68	21.7	21.7	56.2
Neutral	68	21.7	21.7	78.0
Agree	50	16.0	16.0	93.9
Strongly agree (5)	19	6.1	6.1	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My performance goals and standards reflect the most important factors in my job.**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Strongly disagree (1)	75	24.0	24.0	24.0
Disagree	64	20.4	20.4	44.4
Neutral	69	22.0	22.0	66.5
Agree	78	24.9	24.9	91.4
Strongly agree (5)	27	8.6	8.6	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**The criteria used to calculate the performance bonus are fair.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Strongly disagree (1)	73	23.3	23.3	23.3
	Disagree	45	14.4	14.4	37.7
	Neutral	120	38.3	38.3	76.0
	Agree	55	17.6	17.6	93.6
	Strongly agree (5)	20	6.4	6.4	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**The performance bonus motivates me to strive for excellence.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Strongly disagree (1)	75	24.0	24.0	24.0
	Disagree	46	14.7	14.7	38.7
	Neutral	77	24.6	24.6	63.3
	Agree	79	25.2	25.2	88.5
	Strongly agree (5)	36	11.5	11.5	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**The performance bonus motivates poor performers to work harder in order to get a bonus in the future.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Strongly disagree (1)	75	24.0	24.0	24.0
	Disagree	56	17.9	17.9	41.9
	Neutral	90	28.8	28.8	70.6
	Agree	64	20.4	20.4	91.1
	Strongly agree (5)	28	8.9	8.9	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My recent performance rating was fair.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Strongly disagree (1)	24	7.7	7.7	7.7
	Disagree	28	8.9	8.9	16.6
	Neutral	83	26.5	26.5	43.1
	Agree	125	39.9	39.9	83.1
	Strongly agree (5)	53	16.9	16.9	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**Academic leadership**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Not emphasised (1)	69	22.0	22.0	22.0
	Less emphasised	46	14.7	14.7	36.7
	Fairly emphasised	96	30.7	30.7	67.4
	Emphasised	90	28.8	28.8	96.2
	Overemphasised (5)	12	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**Teaching and learning**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Not emphasised (1)	13	4.2	4.2	4.2
	Less emphasised	35	11.2	11.2	15.3
	Fairly emphasised	78	24.9	24.9	40.3
	Emphasised	158	50.5	50.5	90.7
	Overemphasised (5)	29	9.3	9.3	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

### Research

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Not emphasised (1)	6	1.9	1.9	1.9
	Less emphasised	14	4.5	4.5	6.4
	Fairly emphasised	67	21.4	21.4	27.8
	Emphasised	144	46.0	46.0	73.8
	Overemphasised (5)	82	26.2	26.2	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

### Community engagement

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Not emphasised (1)	22	7.0	7.0	7.0
	Less emphasised	48	15.3	15.3	22.4
	Fairly emphasised	97	31.0	31.0	53.4
	Emphasised	96	30.7	30.7	84.0
	Overemphasised (5)	50	16.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

### Academic citizenship

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Not emphasised (1)	23	7.3	7.3	7.3
	Less emphasised	51	16.3	16.3	23.6
	Fairly emphasised	99	31.6	31.6	55.3
	Emphasised	120	38.3	38.3	93.6
	Overemphasised (5)	20	6.4	6.4	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**My most recent performance review rating (overall) as documented by  
my manager was:**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumul ative percen tage
Valid	Outstanding (4.5–5)	11	3.5	3.5	3.5
	Exceeds requirements (3.1– 4.4)	270	86.3	86.3	89.8
	Meets requirements (3)	29	9.3	9.3	99.0
	Needs improvement (less than 3)	3	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**I am satisfied with my last overall performance rating.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Yes	192	61.3	61.5	61.5
	No	44	14.1	14.1	75.6
	Neutral	76	24.3	24.4	100.0
	Total	312	99.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	0.3		
Total		313	100.0		

**In your opinion, do you think your manager conducts performance reviews fairly and consistently across all employees?**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Yes	121	38.7	38.7	38.7
No	63	20.1	20.1	58.8
Not sure	129	41.2	41.2	100.0
Total	313	100.0	100.0	

**What is your position?**

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Professor	54	17.3	17.9	17.9
Associate professor	29	9.3	9.6	27.5
Senior lecturer	75	24.0	24.8	52.3
Lecturer	108	34.5	35.8	88.1
Junior lecturer	24	7.7	7.9	96.0
Research assistant	7	2.2	2.3	98.3
CoD	3	1.0	1.0	99.3
Manager	2	0.6	0.7	100.0
Total	302	96.5	100.0	
Missing System	11	3.5		
Total	313	100.0		

**How long have you been in this position at this institution?**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	0–2 years	111	35.5	41.7	41.7
	3–5 years	82	26.2	30.8	72.6
	6–10 years	39	12.5	14.7	87.2
	11–15 years	34	10.9	12.8	100.0
	Total	266	85.0	100.0	
Missing	System	47	15.0		
Total		313	100.0		

**State your experience in the academic job in general, including at other institutions.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	0–2 years	43	13.7	17.8	17.8
	3–5 years	53	16.9	22.0	39.8
	6–10 years	50	16.0	20.7	60.6
	11–15 years	72	23.0	29.9	90.5
	16 +	23	7.3	9.5	100.0
	Total	241	77.0	100.0	
Missing	System	72	23.0		
Total		313	100.0		

### What is your highest qualification?

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	PhD	134	42.8	44.5	44.5
	Professional qualification (e.g. CA)	5	1.6	1.7	46.2
	Master's	112	35.8	37.2	83.4
	Honours	45	14.4	15.0	98.3
	Degree	5	1.6	1.7	100.0
	Total	301	96.2	100.0	
	Missing System	12	3.8		
	Total	313	100.0		



**At which college are you working?**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	College of Art and Environmental Sciences	26	8.3	8.6	8.6
	College of Economic and Management Sciences	89	28.4	29.6	38.2
	College of Education	31	9.9	10.3	48.5
	College of Graduate Studies	4	1.3	1.3	49.8
	College of Human Sciences	90	28.8	29.9	79.7
	College of Law	26	8.3	8.6	88.4
	College of Science, Engineering & Technology	31	9.9	10.3	98.7
	School of Business Leadership	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	301	96.2	100.0	
Missing	System	12	3.8		
Total		313	100.0		

**What is your employment status?**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Permanent	262	83.7	86.8	86.8
	Contract/temporary	40	12.8	13.2	100.0
	Total	302	96.5	100.0	
Missing	System	11	3.5		
Total		313	100.0		

**What is your age?**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	20–25 years	17	5.4	5.6	5.6
	26–30 years	28	8.9	9.3	14.9
	31–35 years	38	12.1	12.6	27.5
	36–40	31	9.9	10.3	37.7
	Over 40	188	60.1	62.3	100.0
	Total	302	96.5	100.0	
Missing	System	11	3.5		
Total		313	100.0		

**State your gender.**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Female	164	52.4	54.3	54.3
	Male	138	44.1	45.7	100.0
	Total	302	96.5	100.0	
Missing	System	11	3.5		
Total		313	100.0		

**What is your marital status?**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Single	70	22.4	24.0	24.0
	Married	200	63.9	68.5	92.5
	Divorced	19	6.1	6.5	99.0
	Widowed	3	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	292	93.3	100.0	
Missing	System	21	6.7		
Total		313	100.0		

**Choose your race below:**

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Black	110	35.1	36.7	36.7
	Coloured	6	1.9	2.0	38.7
	Indian	11	3.5	3.7	42.3
	White	173	55.3	57.7	100.0
	Total	300	95.8	100.0	
Missing	System	13	4.2		
Total		313	100.0		

## APPENDIX D

### T-test results

#### One-sample statistics

	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
<b>I have read and understand the information above and consent to participate in this study on a voluntary basis.</b>	313	1.00	0.000 <sup>a</sup>	0.000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am aware of the existence of a performance management system in my institution.</li> </ul>	313	4.68	0.641	0.036
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The performance management system is clearly defined and its purpose has been communicated to employees.</li> </ul>	313	3.40	1.226	0.069
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I was consulted during the design and development of the current performance management system.</li> </ul>	313	1.88	1.166	0.066
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is clear to me why a performance management system is in place at my institution.</li> </ul>	313	3.34	1.266	0.072
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance management at my institution integrates the goals of individuals with those of the institution.</li> </ul>	313	2.88	1.302	0.074
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The performance management at my institution serves its purpose well.</li> </ul>	313	2.40	1.252	0.071
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager is in a good position to review my performance.</li> </ul>	313	3.42	1.248	0.071
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager is knowledgeable in implementing the performance management system.</li> </ul>	313	3.45	1.168	0.066

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager applies the performance management system in accordance with the institutional policy.</li> </ul>	313	3.49	1.115	0.063
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is possible to provide evidence of my performance to my manager in order to justify my ratings.</li> </ul>	313	3.74	1.115	0.063
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset me.</li> </ul>	313	3.40	1.139	0.064
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager gives me the rating that I have earned even if it might upset the manager.</li> </ul>	313	3.23	1.149	0.065
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My rating is the result of my manager trying to avoid bad feelings among employees.</li> </ul>	313	2.20	1.089	0.062
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager provides me with clear explanations that justify the ratings I get for my work.</li> </ul>	313	3.29	1.164	0.066
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager judges the work I perform, not me as an individual.</li> </ul>	313	3.47	1.138	0.064
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My manager rates employee performance consistently across all employees.</li> </ul>	313	3.03	1.167	0.066
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My performance goals and standards are clear to me.</li> </ul>	313	3.46	1.168	0.066
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My performance goals and standards are set on the right level for my position: not too high, not too low.</li> </ul>	313	3.28	1.178	0.067
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My performance goals and standards reflect the most important factors in my job.</li> </ul>	313	3.23	1.258	0.071
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am satisfied with my involvement in the setting of my performance goals and standards.</li> </ul>	313	3.23	1.230	0.070
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My performance goals and standards are imposed on me by my manager and senior management in the institution.</li> </ul>	313	3.23	1.312	0.074

• My work performance is rated against the standards and goals previously agreed upon.	313	3.34	1.124	0.064
• My performance goals allow for changes to be made if what I actually do in my job changes.	313	3.13	1.158	0.065
• I feel some of the tasks I actually do in my work are ignored when setting the performance goals.	313	3.45	1.270	0.072
• I feel that the performance management system respects my independence and freedom regarding my work as an academic.	313	2.67	1.297	0.073
• The performance management system helped me develop a positive attitude towards my job.	313	2.61	1.342	0.076
• I feel that the current performance management system takes my workload into consideration.	313	2.37	1.270	0.072
• All efforts I put into work are considered during the final performance review at the end of the year.	313	2.74	1.302	0.074
• The criteria used to calculate the performance bonus are fair.	313	2.69	1.191	0.067
• The performance bonus motivates me to strive for excellence.	313	2.86	1.343	0.076
• The performance bonus motivates poor performers to work harder in order to get a bonus in the future.	313	2.73	1.276	0.072
• My recent performance rating was fair.	313	3.50	1.110	0.063
• What is your position?	302	3.21	1.409	0.081
• How long have you been in this position at this institution?	266	1.98	1.039	0.064

• State your experience in the academic job in general, including at other institutions.	241	2.91	1.270	0.082
• What is your highest qualification?	301	2.28	1.222	0.070
• At which college are you working?	301	3.88	1.961	0.113
• What is your employment status?	302	1.13	0.340	0.020
• What is your age?	302	4.14	1.269	0.073
• State your gender.	302	1.46	0.499	0.029
• What is your marital status?	292	1.85	0.569	0.033
• Choose your race below:	300	2.82	1.428	0.082

a. t cannot be computed because the standard deviation is 0.